

***San Francisco Planning Department***

# **650-690 FOURTH STREET**

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## ***Draft Environmental Impact Report***

98.864E

Draft EIR Publication Date: January 8, 2000  
Draft EIR Public Hearing Date: February 10, 2000  
Draft EIR Public Comment Period: January 8-February 10, 2000

*Written comments should be sent to:*

DOCUMENTS DEPT.

The Environmental Review Officer  
The Planning Department  
1660 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

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# PLANNING DEPARTMENT



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DATE: January 8, 2000

TO: Distribution List for the 650-690 Fourth Street Project Draft EIR

FROM: Hillary Gitelman, Environmental Review Officer

SUBJECT: Request for the Final Environmental Impact Report for the 650-690 Fourth Street Project (Case No. 98.864E)

This is the Draft of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 650-690 Fourth Street Project. A public hearing will be held on the adequacy and accuracy of this document. After the public hearing, our office will prepare and publish a document titled "Summary of Comments and Responses" that will contain a summary of all relevant comments on this Draft EIR and our responses to those comments; it may also specify changes to this Draft EIR. Public agencies and members of the public who testify at the hearing on the Draft EIR will automatically receive a copy of the Comments and Responses document, along with notice of the date reserved for certification; others may receive such copies and notice on request or by visiting our office. This Draft EIR together with the Summary of Comments and Responses document will be considered by the Planning Commission in an advertised public meeting and certified as a Final EIR if deemed adequate.

After certification, we will modify the Draft EIR as specified by the Comments and Responses document and print both documents in a single publication called the Final Environmental Impact Report. The Final EIR will add no new information to the combination of the two documents except to reproduce the certification resolution. It will simply provide the information in one rather than two documents. Therefore, if you receive a copy of the Comments and Responses document in addition to this copy of the Draft EIR, you will technically have a copy of the Final EIR.

We are aware that many people who receive the Draft EIR and Summary of Comments and Responses have no interest in receiving virtually the same information after the EIR has been certified. To avoid expending money and paper needlessly, we would like to send copies of the Final EIR to private individuals only if they request them. If you would like a copy of the Final EIR, therefore, please fill out and mail the postcard provided inside the back cover to the Major Environmental Analysis Office of the Planning Department within two weeks after certification of the EIR. Any private party not requesting a Final EIR by that time will not be mailed a copy.

Thank you for your interest in this project.



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# CHAPTER I

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## SUMMARY

### A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (p. 8)

This project site is located in the South of Market (SoMa) neighborhood of San Francisco in an SSO (Service/Secondary Office) District. The project sponsor would demolish an existing two-story and an existing four-story building to construct a new four-story building with 54 live/work units, ground-level retail, and ground-level and below-grade parking.

The project site is located at the northwest corner of Fourth and Townsend Streets on a block bordered by Townsend Street to the south, Fifth Street to the west, Bluxome Street to the north, and Third Street to the east. The site is directly across Townsend Street from the San Francisco Caltrain Station. The site consists of two parcels, Lots 8 and 9 of Assessor's Block 3786, and is nearly 22,000 square feet in size. The project sponsor, Meier-Vidovich, owns both lots that comprise the project site. The two lots would be merged as part of the proposed project.

The proposed building would contain approximately 133,600 gross square feet (gsf), about 84,600 gsf would be devoted to the 54 live/work units and about 14,700 gsf would be street-level retail space on the Townsend and Fourth Street frontages. Parking for the proposed project would be provided in a below-grade garage accessed from Bluxome Street and would include 56 spaces. An additional 9-space ground-level garage would be devoted to short-term parking for users of the proposed project's retail space. The proposed project would also include one off-street freight loading space and three disabled-accessible parking spaces.

The entire site is currently occupied by two structures, 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street. The four-story 650 Fourth Street building is a wood-frame former tourist hotel constructed in 1907. The building is currently vacant, with the exception of the ground floor that contains a bar and a small restaurant, and is not formally recognized as an historical resource. The two-story 690-698 Fourth Street building is a masonry and concrete industrial/warehouse structure constructed in 1926 that is currently vacant. The approximately 35-foot tall building has been determined eligible for listing for the *National Register of Historic Places* and is therefore included in the *California Register of Historic Places*. The building is not listed in Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code and is not located within an historic district.

The proposed building would be a 70-foot high concrete-frame structure. The four-story rectangular structure would be composed of a ground-floor level devoted almost entirely to retail space, with the three upper levels serving the 54 live/work units. As currently proposed, the building would have an elevator lobby accessed from Fourth Street for the live/work spaces. The proposed building would have one entrance on both Bluxome and Townsend Streets and five entrances on Fourth Street to its ground-floor

retail spaces. The building would cover the entire project site. Project construction would take about 14 months, including demolition of the existing structures, with occupancy planned for March 2001.

## B. MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

This environmental impact report, for the 650-690 Fourth Street Project, focuses on the issues of historic architectural resources and transportation. The historic architectural resource issue relates to the proposed demolition of the existing 690 Fourth Street building. Although not identified as a City landmark or located within an historic district, the building has been determined eligible for the *National Register of Historic Places* (National Register). A second building on the project site that would be demolished, 650 Fourth Street, is a wood-frame hotel building that is not listed in the State Office of Historic Preservation database. Because of the eligibility of the 690 Fourth Street building for the National Register, the building is considered an historical resource under CEQA and its demolition would be considered a significant effect. The proposal would construct a new building that would have more floor area than the existing buildings on the site, thus resulting in an increase in intensity of use at the site and a corresponding increase in traffic. All other potential environmental effects were found to be at a less-than-significant level or to be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor. (Please see the Initial Study, included in this document as Appendix A, for analysis of issues other than historic architectural resources and transportation.)

### HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES (p.23)

The 690-698 Fourth Street building has been formally determined eligible for the *National Register of Historic Places* through a consensus determination between the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and a Federal Agency and is therefore included in the *California Register of Historic Places*. As such, the 690-698 Fourth Street building is considered to be an historical resource under CEQA, and demolition of the building would constitute a "substantial adverse change" that would be a considered significant adverse environmental effect.

The 650 Fourth Street building is not listed in and has not been determined eligible for listing in either the National Register or the California Register. The building does not appear in the State Historic Resources Inventory and is also not listed in a local register of historical resources as defined by Public Resources Code Section 5020.1. The 650 Fourth Street building is of an architectural style that is common in San Francisco, particularly in some of the city's older residential neighborhoods, and has lost much of its architectural integrity as a result of severe fire damage. While the 650 Fourth Street building is clearly a handsome older building, there is no evidence that it meets the definition of an historical resource under CEQA and its demolition would not be considered a significant adverse environmental effect.

### TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION (p. 34)

The project would generate about 35 new vehicle trips and 40 new transit trips during the p.m. peak hour. Project traffic would not worsen from existing conditions at any of the five study intersections, four of



which currently operate at LOS B or better (Fourth/Brannan, Fourth/Bluxome, Fourth/Townsend, and Fifth/Bluxome) and the fifth operates at LOS D (Fourth and King) during the p.m. peak hour. Under interim cumulative (Year 2005) and longer-range cumulative (Year 2015) traffic conditions, operations at all of the study intersections would remain acceptable (LOS D) or better and the project's contribution to the deterioration at other intersections to unacceptable levels would be minimal. As such, no significant project impacts would occur.

Nearly all of the approximately 40 net new p.m. peak-hour transit trips would be on MUNI, and would be dispersed over the MUNI routes that serve the project area. The remaining trips would be on Caltrain to the Peninsula. At this scale, the project-generated MUNI and regional transit ridership would not noticeably affect transit services or overcrowding on transit vehicles. Similarly, under interim cumulative and longer-range cumulative conditions, the project would contribute minimally to local and regional increases in transit ridership and therefore would not result in a significant impact.

The project would create parking demand for about 118 daily spaces. The project's proposed 73 spaces would provide eight more than the 65 spaces required by the Planning Code and four fewer than that called for by Planning Department policy (based on the 1998 Resolution adopted by the Planning Commission that calls for one space for each live/work unit). The estimated parking demand would exceed the proposed supply by 45 spaces. However, nearby off-street parking facilities, including lots on Townsend between Third and Fourth Streets, Sixth between Bryant and Brannan Streets, and Bryant between Fifth and Sixth Streets, currently operate at less than 80 percent of capacity and would be able to accommodate the project's additional demand. Under interim cumulative conditions, a parking shortfall of 872 spaces would occur, in part due to the temporary loss of between 500 and 2,000 parking spaces under and adjacent to the freeway as a result of Caltrans' reconstruction of the San Francisco approach to the Bay Bridge. Unmet parking demand would not be considered a significant environmental impact.

The proposed project's one off-street (standard truck) freight loading space would meet the Planning Code requirement. Neither pedestrian nor bicycle conditions would be substantially affected by the project. In summary, the project would not result in a significant impact on traffic, transit, circulation or parking.

## **C. AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED**

The primary area of controversy associated with the proposed project concerns the proposal to demolish the existing 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street buildings currently located on the project site. The 650 Fourth Street building is not identified as a City landmark, located within an historic district, or identified as significant by the State Office of Historic Preservation. The 690-698 Fourth Street building is also not identified as a City landmark or located within an historic district, however is considered eligible by the State Office of Historic Preservation for the National Register.

As with all projects, the project design will continue to evolve as the sponsor makes refinements and receives input from the Planning Department and Planning Commission. The project is analyzed in this EIR at a level of analysis sufficiently broad to permit these refinements without necessarily triggering new environmental review, yet in sufficient detail to identify specific potential physical effects on the environment. Subsequent changes in the project will be evaluated to ensure that they would not cause new or substantially more severe environmental impacts.

## **D. MAIN MITIGATION MEASURES (p. 42)**

### **NOISE**

#### **MEASURES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT**

- The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to limit pile driving activity such that it results in the least disturbance to occupants and users of adjacent and nearby properties. Implementation of this measure may require the construction contractor(s) to obtain a permit for nighttime work from the Director of the Department of Public Works if pile driving during nighttime hours would be the least disruptive to these occupants and users.
- The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to predrill holes for the piles (if feasible based on the soil type on the project site) to the maximum feasible depth to minimize noise and vibration from pile driving.
- The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to use state-of-the-art muffled and shielded pile drivers.

### **CONSTRUCTION AIR QUALITY**

#### **MEASURE PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT**

- The project sponsor would require the contractor(s) to spray exterior demolition sites with water during demolition, excavation and construction activity; spray unpaved exterior construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other material; cover trucks hauling debris, soil, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during demolition and construction at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor would require that the contractor(s) obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose. The project sponsors would require the project the contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as a prohibition on idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementation of specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

#### **MEASURE PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT**

- Should evidence of archaeological resources of potential significance be found during ground disturbance, the project sponsor would immediately notify the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) and would suspend any excavation which the ERO determined could damage such archaeological resources. Excavation or construction activities which might damage discovered



cultural resources would be suspended for a total maximum of four weeks over the course of construction.

After notifying the ERO, the project sponsor would select an archaeologist to assist the Office of Environmental Review in determining the significance of the find. The archaeologist would prepare a draft report containing an assessment of the potential significance of the find and recommendations for what measures should be implemented to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources. Based on this report, the ERO would recommend specific additional mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor.

Mitigation measures might include a site security program, additional on-site investigations by the archaeologist, and/or documentation, preservation, and recovery of cultural materials. Finally, the archaeologist would prepare a draft report documenting the cultural resources that were discovered, an evaluation as to their significance, and a description as to how any archaeological testing, exploration and/or recovery program was conducted.

Copies of all draft reports prepared according to this mitigation measure would be sent first and directly to the ERO for review. Following approval by the ERO, copies of the final report(s) would be sent by the archaeologist directly to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center. Three copies of the final archaeology report(s) shall be submitted to the Office of Environmental Review, accompanied by copies of the transmittals documenting its distribution to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center.

## HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

### MEASURES IDENTIFIED IN THIS REPORT

- Prior to demolition of the 690-698 Fourth Street building, the project sponsor could employ an architectural historian to document the building and its history in greater detail than has been done to date. The project sponsor would submit that documentation, along with modified-format Historic American Buildings Survey drawings of the buildings, to the History Room of the San Francisco Main Library, the Secretary of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, and the California Historical Society.
- To promote recognition of the building to be demolished, the project sponsor could install on or near the proposed structure a plaque and/or other monument memorializing the 690-698 Fourth Street building to be demolished. A plaque could be mounted on the front of the new building to provide pedestrians with both a photographic image of and historical text about the 690-698 Fourth Street building. Design and placement of such plaque would be reviewed and approved by the Planning Department in consultation with the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board.
- The project sponsor could reuse architectural elements from one or both of the existing buildings, such as the American Radiator Company parapet medallions from the existing 690-698 Fourth Street building, in the design of new building.

These mitigation measures would reduce but not eliminate the project's significant impact on historic architectural resources.

## E. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT (p. 46)

### ALTERNATIVE A: NO PROJECT

Under this alternative, the site would remain in its existing condition. The 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street buildings would not be demolished, and the proposed live/work and retail structure would not be constructed. Unless the existing buildings on the site were upgraded to accommodate other tenants, there would be no temporary construction impacts, such as noise, dust and construction traffic.

This alternative would not result in any increase in travel to and from the project site, thus avoiding traffic-related effects of the proposed project. This alternative would also not cause any of the other impacts associated with the proposed project such as minor temporary increases in noise and air quality effects due to construction, minor increase in shadow, and potential hazardous materials effects.

This alternative would not result in demolition of 650 Fourth Street or 690-698 Fourth Street, a structure determined eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* and an historical resource under CEQA. Therefore this alternative would not result in the significant unavoidable impact to historical resources.

The 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street buildings, which contain a total of approximately 53,000 square feet, are vacant except for a ground-floor restaurant and bar. Full reoccupancy of these buildings would generate incrementally greater traffic and air pollutant emissions, compared to existing conditions, but less than the proposed project. However, whether or when such occupancy would occur is purely speculative.

### ALTERNATIVE B: PRESERVATION ALTERNATIVE

Under the Preservation Alternative, the 650 and 690-698 Fourth Street buildings would not be demolished. Instead, both buildings would be rehabilitated and reused. The 650 Fourth Street building would be reused for its original use, as a tourist hotel (approximately 50 rooms) with ground-floor retail space (approximately 5,000 sq.ft.). The 690-698 Fourth Street building would be rehabilitated and converted for use as office space (approximately 38,000 sq.ft.).

Under this alternative, the 650 Fourth Street building would be retained and would be subject to complete interior and exterior rehabilitation, including upgrading to current building code requirements. The 690-698 Fourth Street building would also be rehabilitated and its walls and second floor would be retained. Rehabilitation work would conform with the Secretary of Interior Standards. As such, this alternative would avoid the project's significant impact on historic architectural resources.

This alternative would result in less floor space than the proposed project, therefore less than significant transportation and related air-quality effects would be incrementally less severe than with the project.

Temporary construction impacts, such as noise, dust and construction traffic, would also be less than with the project under this alternative.

According to the project sponsor, this alternative would not meet most of the sponsor's objectives and rehabilitation of the existing structures would require prohibitive expenditures that would make such a venture economically unrealistic..



# CHAPTER II

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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### A. SITE LOCATION AND PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

This project site is located in the South of Market (SoMa) neighborhood of San Francisco in an SSO (Service/Secondary Office) District. The project sponsor would demolish an existing two-story and an existing four-story building to construct a new four-story building with 54 live/work units, ground-level retail, and ground-level and below-grade parking.

The project site is located at the northwest corner of Fourth and Townsend Streets on a block bordered by Townsend Street to the south, Fifth Street to the west, Bluxome Street to the north, and Third Street to the east (see Figure 1). The site is directly across Townsend Street from the San Francisco Caltrain Station. The site consists of two parcels, Lots 8 and 9 of Assessor's Block 3786, and is nearly 22,000 square feet (240' x 91' 8") in size. The project sponsor, Meier-Vidovich, owns both lots that comprise the project site. The two lots would be merged as part of the proposed project.

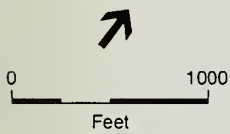
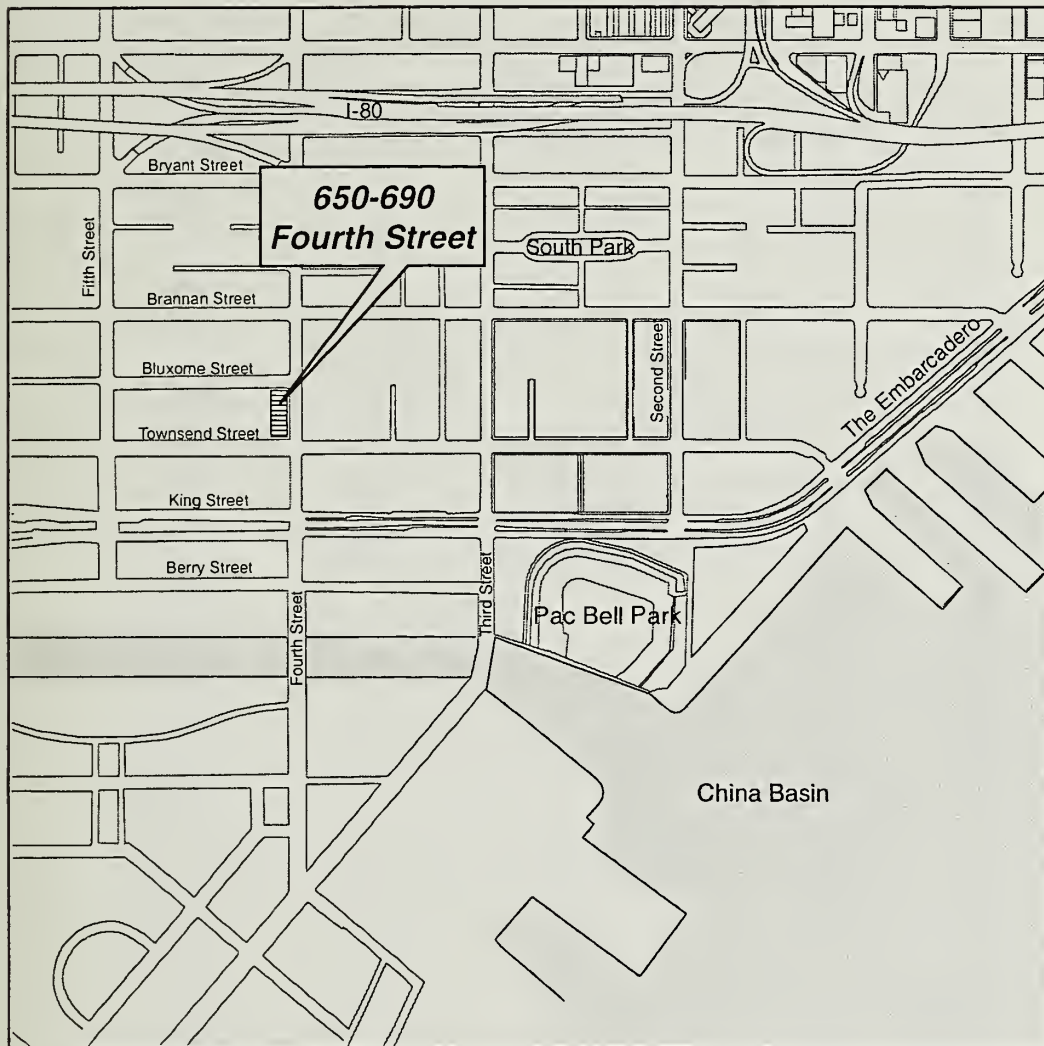
The proposed building would contain approximately 133,600 gross square feet (gsf), about 84,600 gsf would be devoted to the 54 live/work units and about 14,700 gsf would be street-level retail space on the Townsend and Fourth Street frontages (see Figure 2 for the ground-level plan). Specific retail tenants have yet to be identified. Parking for the proposed project would be provided in a below-grade garage accessed from Bluxome Street and would include 64 spaces (see Figure 3 for the garage-level plan). An additional nine ground-level spaces would be devoted to short-term parking for users of the proposed project's retail space. The Planning Code requires that a total of 65 spaces be provided for the proposed combination of live/work and retail uses, thus the project would exceed the code-required number of spaces. The project would provide four fewer spaces than that called for by Planning Department policy for live/work projects (based on Resolution 14556, adopted by the Planning Commission in 1998).


One off-street freight loading space would be provided in the ground-level garage with access from Fourth Street. In accordance with Planning Code Sec. 155(i) and 155(j), the project would include three disabled-accessible parking spaces, one in the ground-level garage and two in the basement garage.

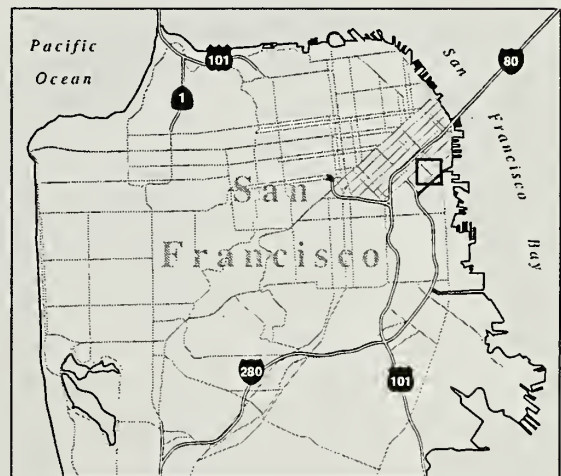
The entire 22,000 square-foot site is currently occupied by two structures, 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street. The four-story 650 Fourth Street building is a wood-frame former tourist hotel constructed in 1907 and is currently vacant with the exception of the ground floor that contains a bar and a small restaurant. The 650 Fourth Street building is a handsome older structure, but is not formally recognized as an historical resource.

The two-story 690-698 Fourth Street building is a masonry and concrete industrial/warehouse structure constructed in 1926 that is currently vacant. The building is about 35 feet tall to the parapet on both





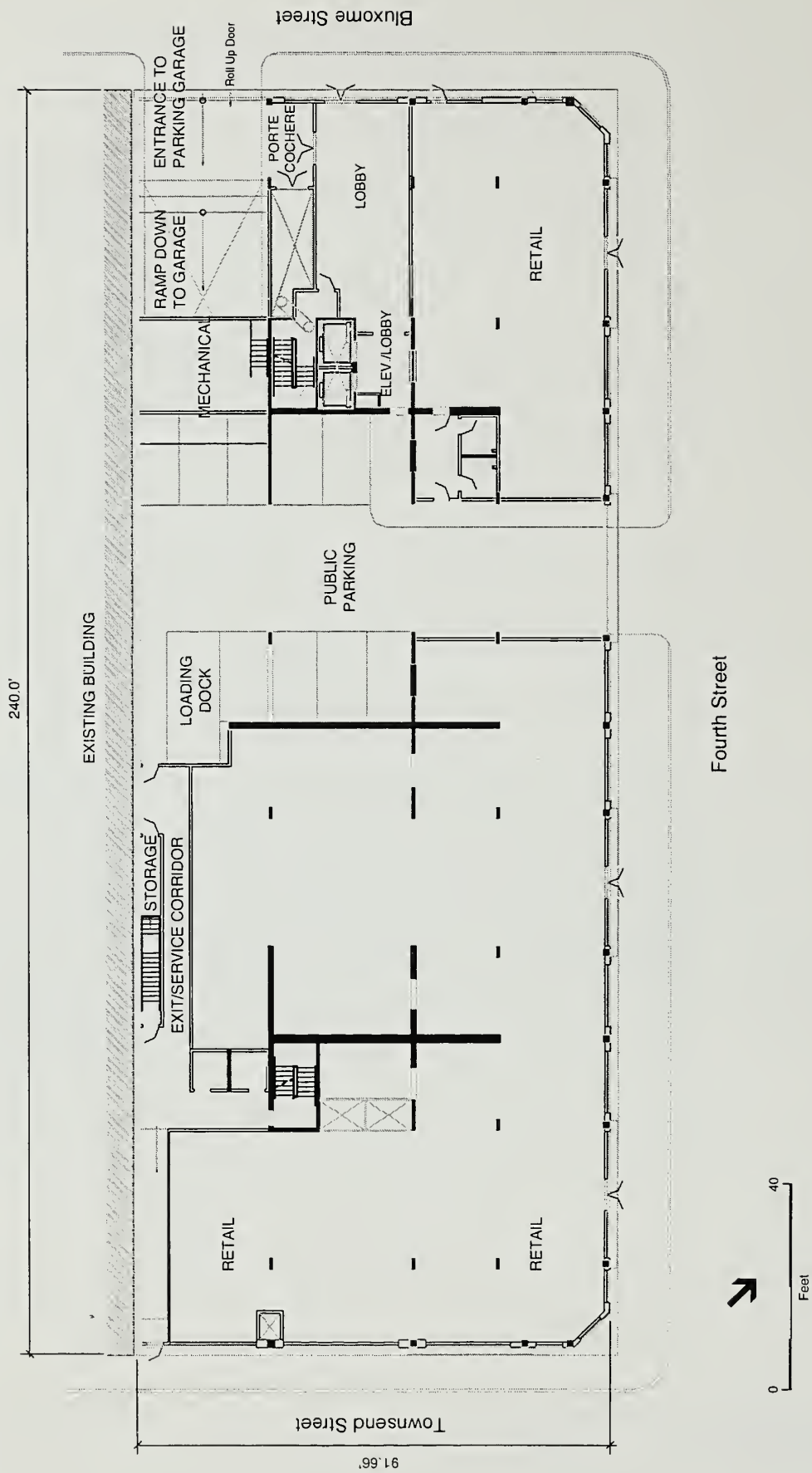
 Project Site  
Assessor's Block 3786  
Lots 8 and 9



SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates; San Francisco Planning Department

650-690 Fourth Street / 990312 ■

**Figure 1**  
Project Location

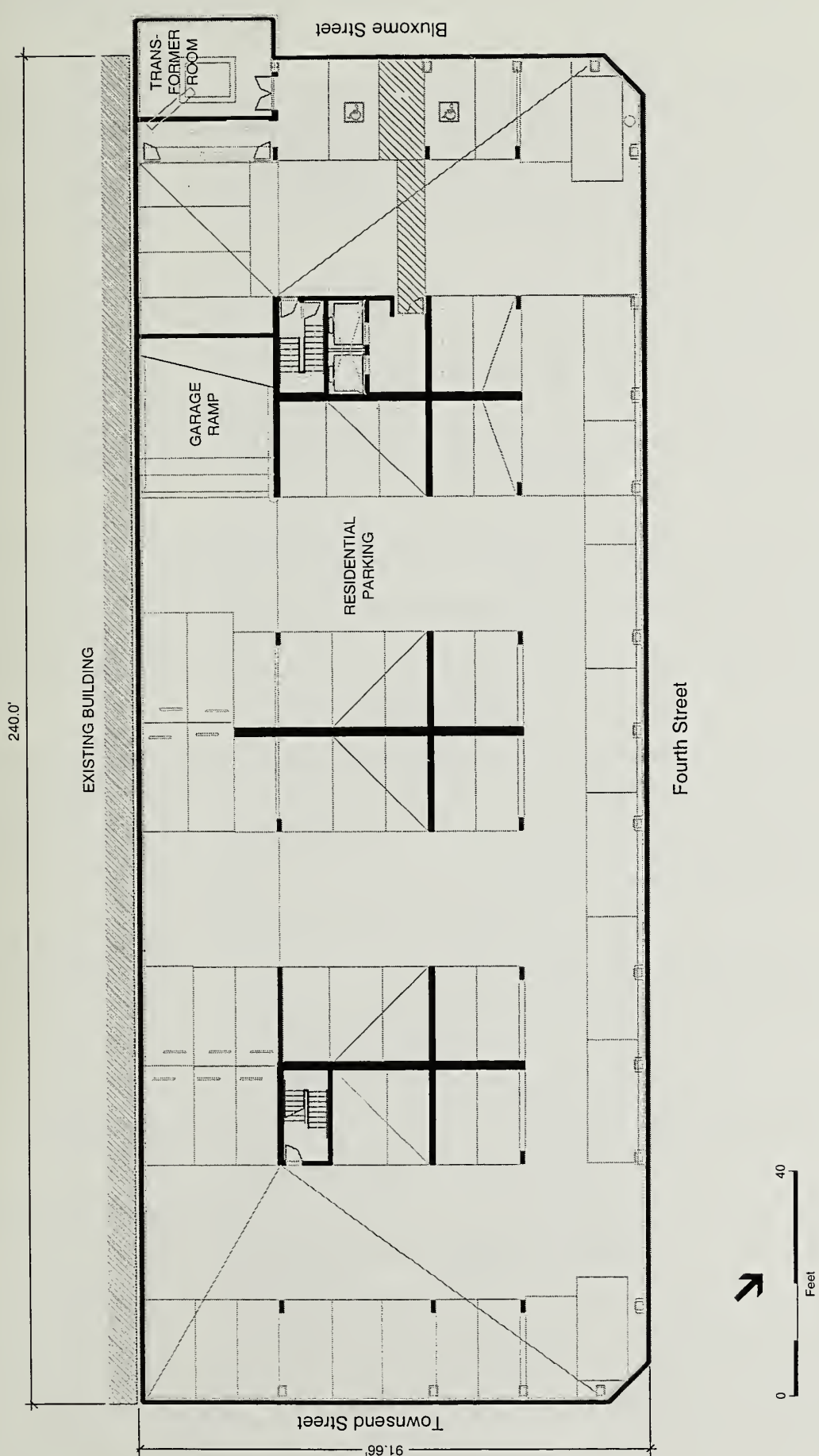


650-690 Fourth Street / 990312

## Figure 2

Proposed Ground-Level Plan

SOURCE: Dan Ionescu Architects & Planners





Townsend and Fourth Streets. The approximately 35,000-square-foot building is rated “2S2” on the State Office of Historic Preservation database, meaning that it has been evaluated and determined “eligible for separate listing by a consensus determination” for the *National Register of Historic Places* (National Register). As a result of this determination, the building is included in the *California Register of Historic Places*. The building is not listed in Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code and is not located within an historic district.

The proposed building would be a 70-foot high concrete-frame structure (Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the proposed elevations). The four-story rectangular structure would be composed of a ground-floor level devoted almost entirely to retail space, with the three upper levels serving the 54 live/work units. The typical live/work unit size would be approximately 1,600 sq. ft. (see Figure 6 for typical floor plans). The ground-floor level would be composed of a series of large retail window panes with overhanging canopies. The upper three levels would have large multi-paned windows and a series of projecting window bays. The top level units would have direct access to a roof deck.

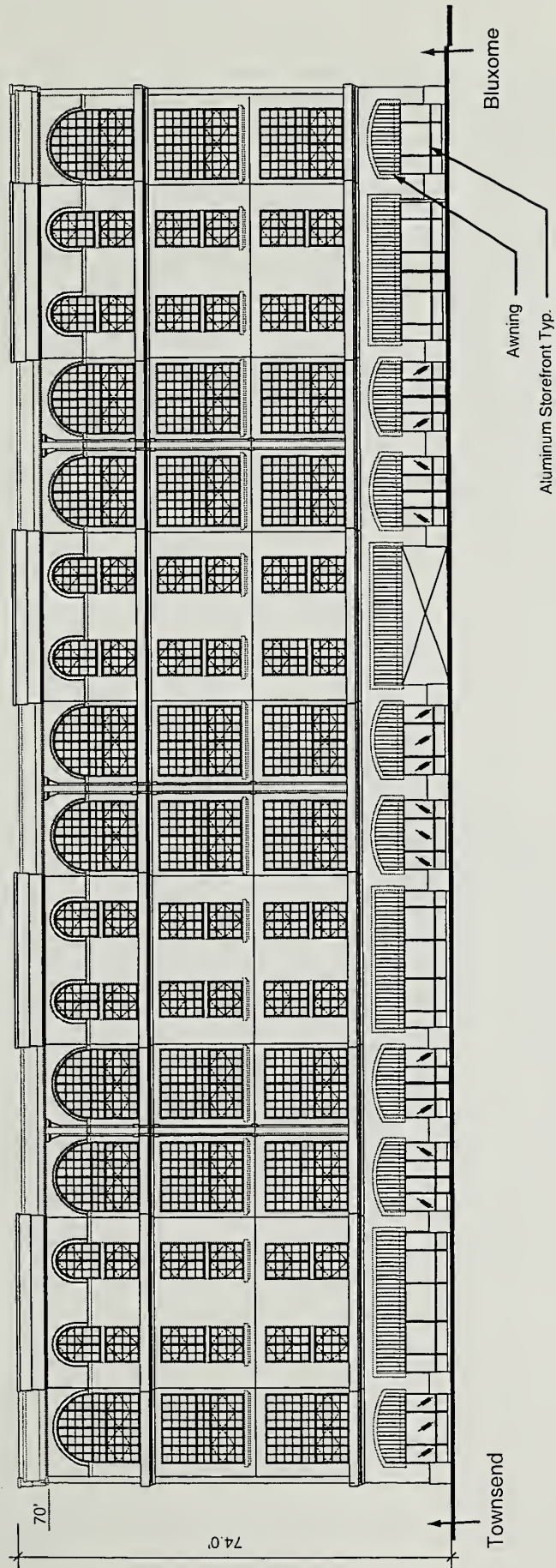
According to the project architect, the proposed project’s design is intended to fit into the existing fabric of the neighborhood by evoking the 1920-1930 era industrial buildings of the South of Market area. Similar to the historical structures of the area, the proposed project would be a concrete frame structure with cement plaster finish, metal-framed windows, high ceilings, open interiors, and touches of neo-classicism in the facade such as arched windows, embedded columns, and strong horizontal elements at the base and top of the elevations.

As currently proposed, the building would have an elevator lobby accessed from Fourth Street for the live/work spaces. The proposed building would have one entrance on both Bluxome and Townsend Streets and five entrances on Fourth Street to its ground-floor retail spaces. An at-grade off-street loading dock would be accessible from Bluxome Street as would the below-grade parking garage. The building would cover the entire project site.

Project construction would take about 14 months, including demolition of the existing structures, with occupancy planned for March 2001. Construction cost, including demolition, is estimated at \$6 million. The project architect is Dan Ionescu Architects and Planners.

## B. PROJECT SPONSOR’S OBJECTIVES

- To provide the City with 54 well-designed live/work units to serve the growing need in San Francisco for housing that will enable existing employees to remain in the City.
- To construct live/work space that will attract new multimedia employees to the South of Market to enable San Francisco to maintain its leadership position in the multimedia industry.
- To replace a predominantly vacant industrial building with infill live/work development and ground floor retail space.
- To construct a live/work building near sufficient local and regional transit services.

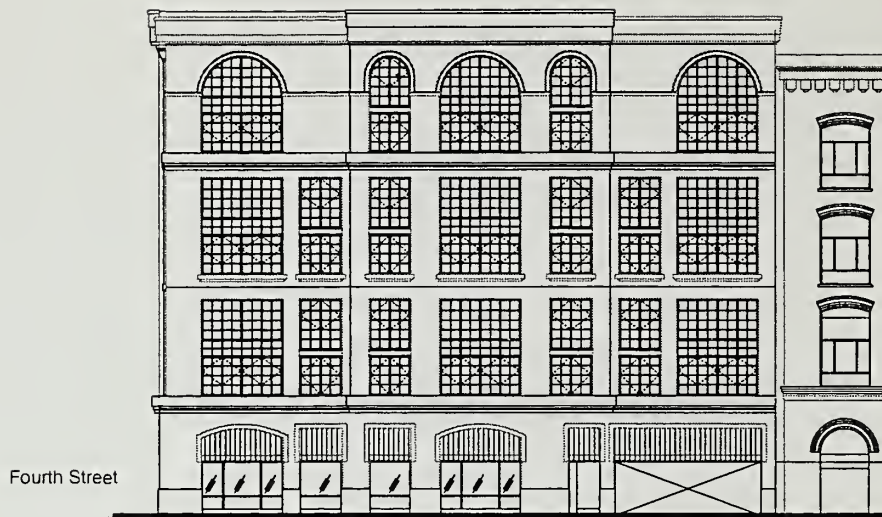


650-690 Fourth Street / 990312 ■

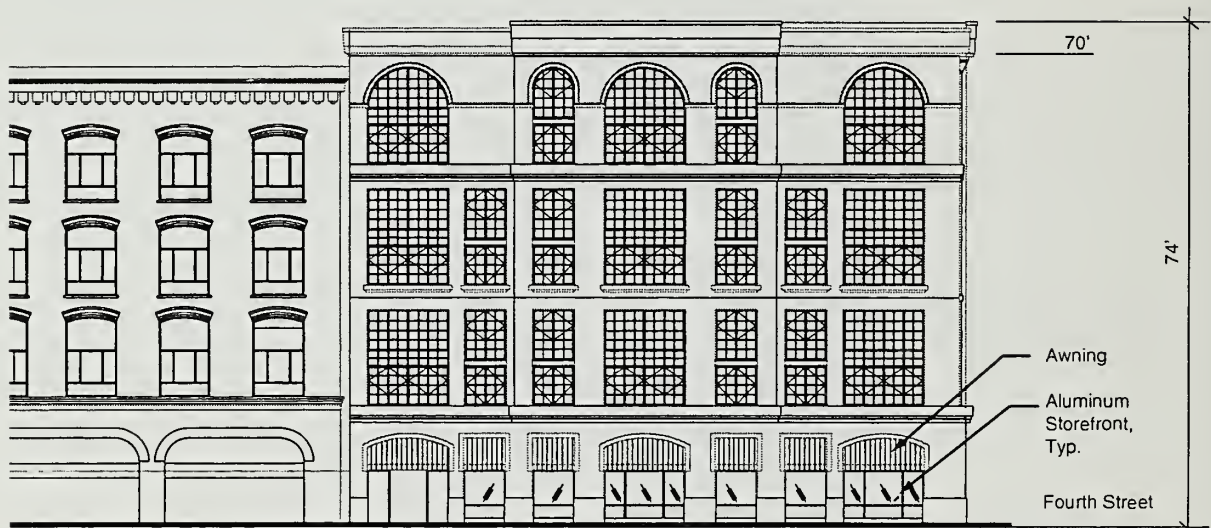
**Figure 4**

Proposed Fourth Street Elevation

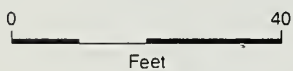
SOURCE: Dan Ionescu Architects & Planners



Bluxome Street Elevation



Townsend Street Elevation

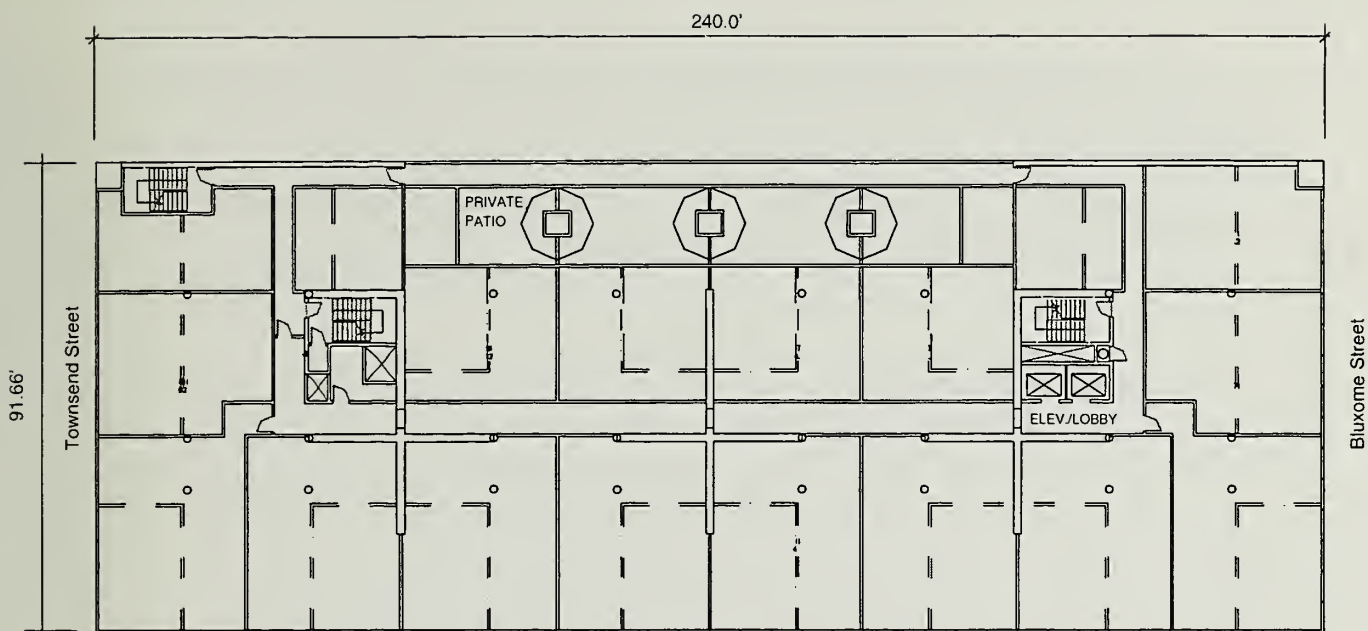


SOURCE: Dan Ionescu Architects & Planners

650-690 Fourth Street / 990312 ■

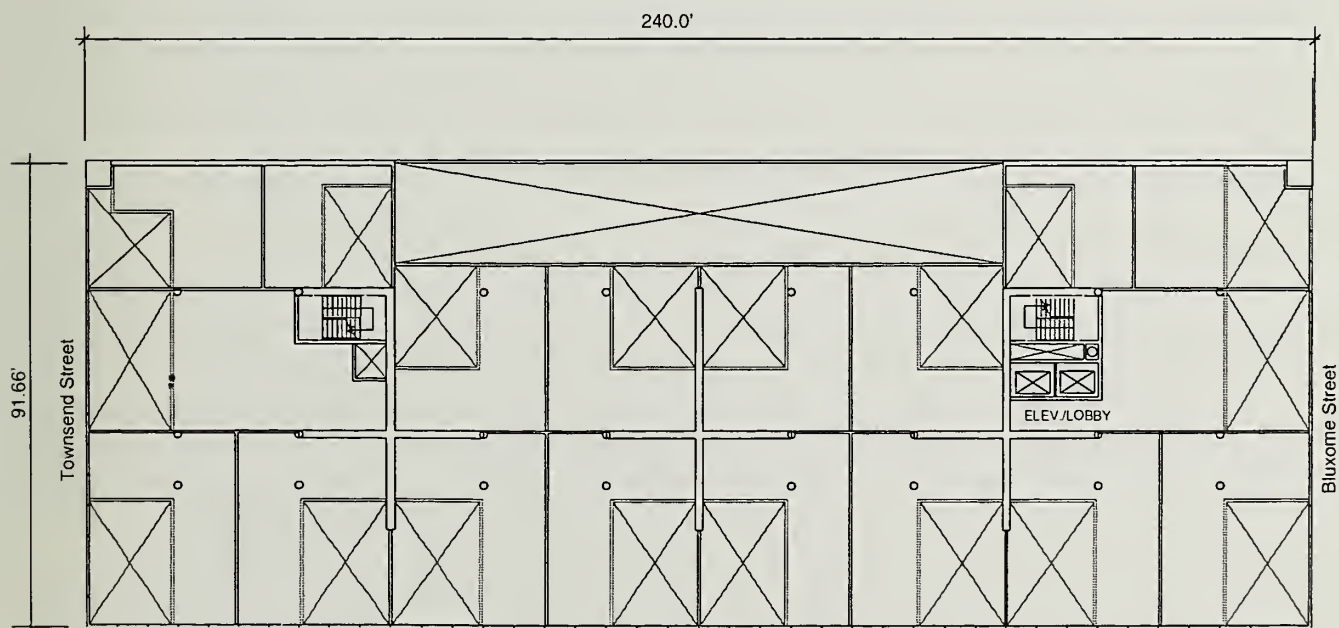
**Figure 5**  
Proposed Bluxome and Townsend  
Street Elevations





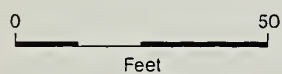
Fourth Street

Lower Level



Fourth Street

Upper Level



SOURCE: Dan Ionescu Architects & Planners

650-690 Fourth Street / 990312 ■

**Figure 6**  
Proposed Typical Floor Plans for  
Lower and Upper Levels

- To design a building consistent with the traditional shapes and textures of existing industrial buildings in the area.
- To encourage the location of neighborhood-serving retail activities throughout the South of Market area by providing ground floor retail space.
- To construct a building with pedestrian-orientation at the ground floor.
- To encourage the use of bicycles by live/work occupants and retail employees by providing secure bicycle parking spaces within the project.
- To provide a development that will be integrated into the surrounding area in appearance, scale, and use.
- To construct a cost effective and economically feasible live/work project that produces a reasonable return on investment for the project sponsor and other investors.

## C. APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

This EIR will undergo a public comment period as noted on the cover, including a public hearing before the Planning Commission on the Draft EIR. Following the public comment period, responses to written and oral comments will be prepared and published in a Draft Summary of Comments and Responses document. The Draft EIR will be revised as appropriate and, with the Draft Summary of Comments and Responses, presented to the Planning Commission for certification as to accuracy, objectivity, and completeness. No approvals or permits may be issued before the Final EIR is certified.

## APPROVALS

The project would be within the height limit of the 65-X Height and Bulk District, which establishes a 65-foot height limit and no bulk restrictions. Within South of Market districts, additional building height, up to five feet above the otherwise applicable height limit, is permitted by Planning Code Section 260(b)(2)(O) for projects where the uppermost floor of the building is to be solely occupied by live/work units. As such, the 70-foot height of the proposed project would be permitted under the Planning Code. The project would also be subject to the provisions of Planning Code Section 295 regarding the casting of shadow on certain public open spaces. See the Initial Study in Appendix A, for a discussion of shadow effects. The proposed lot merger would require a Parcel Map for merger from the Department of Public Works. The project would require building permits, which would require review and approval by the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, the Department of Public Works, and the Fire Department. The project would also require approval of demolition and building permits by the Department of Building Inspection. The project would not require any exceptions or variances.

On August 5, 1999 the City Planning Commission adopted interim controls for the City's industrially zoned land. The general intent of the 15-month interim controls is to create an Industrial Protection Zone (IPZ) and Mixed Use Housing Zones. Within the Mixed Use Housing Zones, new housing uses,



including live/work units, are a principally permitted use. Within the IPZ, live/work projects are generally not permitted. On the boundary between these two zones, new live/work projects are allowable as a conditional use. The proposed project is located on a block that has been designated as being within the proposed IPZ Buffer Zone where new live/work projects would be a conditional use. However, as a “pipeline” project, with an application on file prior to April 22, 1999, the proposed project would be subject to staff initiated Discretionary Review before the City Planning Commission rather than conditional use authorization.

Environmental plans and policies, like the Bay Area '97 *Clean Air Plan*, directly address physical environmental issues and/or contain standards or targets that must be met in order to preserve or improve specific components of the City's physical environment. The proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy.

On November 4, 1986, the voters of San Francisco passed Proposition M, the Accountable Planning Initiative, which added Section 101.1 to the Planning Code and established eight Priority Policies. These policies are: preservation and enhancement of neighborhood-serving retail uses; protection of neighborhood character; preservation and enhancement of affordable housing; discouragement of commuter automobiles; protection of industrial and service sectors from commercial office development and enhancement of resident employment and business ownership; maximization of earthquake preparedness; landmark and historic building preservation; and protection of open space. Prior to issuing a permit for any project which requires an Initial Study under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), or adopting any zoning ordinance or development agreement, the City is required to find that the proposed project is consistent with the Priority Policies.

## GENERAL PLAN

The San Francisco General Plan, which provides general policies and objectives to guide land use decisions, contains some policies that relate to physical environmental issues. No obvious or substantial conflicts with the General Plan have been identified. Nonetheless, potential conflicts with the General Plan will be considered further by the decisions-makers as part of the decision to approve, modify or disapprove a proposed project. Any potential conflict not identified here could be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project. The decision-makers would review the project in the context of applicable objectives and policies of the General Plan. Some of the key objectives and policies are noted here.

### *RESIDENCE ELEMENT*

Objective 1, Policy 2: Facilitate the conversion of underused industrial and commercial areas to residential use, giving preference to permanently affordable housing units.

Objective 2, Policy 1: Set allowable densities in established residential areas at levels which will promote compatibility with prevailing neighborhood scale and character.

## ***URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT***

Objective 1, Policy 3: Recognize that buildings, when seen together, produce a total effect that characterizes the city and its districts.

Objective 2, Policy 4: Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with the past.

Objective 2, Policy 6: Respect the character of older development nearby in the design of new buildings.

Objective 3, Policy 1: Promote harmony in the visual relationships and transitions between new and older buildings.

Objective 3, Policy 5: Relate the height of buildings to important attributes of the city pattern and to the height and character of existing development.

Objective 3, Policy 6: Relate the bulk of buildings to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.

## ***TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT***

Policy 26.3: Encourage pedestrian serving uses on the sidewalk.

Policy 28.1: Provide secure bicycle parking in new governmental, commercial, and residential developments.

Policy 40.1: Provide off-street facilities for freight loading and service vehicles on the site of new buildings sufficient to meet the demands generated by the intended uses. Seek opportunities to create new off-street loading facilities for existing buildings.

## ***COMMUNITY SAFETY ELEMENT***

Policy 2.1: Assure that new construction meets current structural and life safety standards.

## ***SOUTH OF MARKET AREA PLAN***

Objective 3, Policy 1: Increase the supply of housing without adversely affecting the scale, density, and architectural character of existing residential or mixed use neighborhoods or displacing light industrial and/or business service activities.

Objective 5, Policy 4: Provide adequate parking and loading resources for new South of Market residential and business development.

Objective 7, Policy 2: Preserve the architectural character and identity of South of Market residential and commercial/industrial buildings.

Objective 7, Policy 4: Preserve individual architecturally and/or historically significant buildings which contribute to the area's identity, give visual orientation, and which impart a sense of continuity with San Francisco's past.

Objective 7, Policy 5: Provide incentives for preservation of landmark quality buildings and contributory buildings in historic districts.

Objective 8, Policy 2: Encourage the location of neighborhood-serving retail and community service activities throughout the South of Market.

# CHAPTER III

## ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND IMPACTS

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An Initial Study was completed in order to determine whether or not the project would have the potential to result in significant environmental effects and thus whether or not preparation of an EIR was required. The Initial Study concluded that the project would have the potential for creating significant effects on the environment, in particular with regards to historic architectural resources and transportation. As such, this EIR provides a complete analysis of those topics. The Initial Study (included as Appendix A) determined that the project would not result in significant effects related to land use, visual quality, population, noise, air quality, shadow, utilities/public services, biology, geology/topography, and hazards. These issues are not addressed in this EIR. Land use setting information is, however, provided below for informational purposes.

### A. ZONING AND LAND USE

The 22,000 square-foot project site (Lots 8 and 9 of Assessor's Block 3786) is currently occupied by a vacant two-story warehouse building at 690-698 Fourth Street and a four-story former tourist hotel at 650 Fourth Street in which only a ground-floor restaurant and bar continue to operate.

Land uses in the project vicinity are varied and include light industry, a creamery, live/work units, offices, warehouses, and parking. Across Townsend Street is the Caltrain depot that provides rail passenger service to the Peninsula/South Bay. Pacific Bell Park, the future home of the San Francisco Giants, is under construction at a site on King Street, between Second and Third Streets, two blocks from the project site.

The project site is located within the South of Market Planning Area, as identified in the *General Plan*. The project site is located across Fourth Street from the proposed South End District, an area that was formerly the interim Ballpark Vicinity Special Use District (BV SUD) and for which new permanent zoning controls are expected to be considered by the Planning Commission in the coming months.<sup>1</sup>

On August 5, 1999, the Planning Commission adopted interim zoning controls for the City's industrially zoned land. The general intent of the interim zoning controls is to create an Industrial Protection Zone (IPZ) and Mixed Use Housing Zones within the City's industrially zoned land. Within the Mixed Use Housing Zones, new housing uses, including live/work units, are a principally permitted use. Within the IPZ, live/work projects are generally not permitted. On the boundary between these two zones, new live/work projects would be allowable as a conditional use. The project site is located on a block that has

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<sup>1</sup> Under the proposed permanent controls, properties within the former BV SUD that are zoned M-1, M-2, and SSO (as is the project site) would become part of a new South End Office District. Within this new district, the density for housing or commercial space would not change, properties currently permitted for housing or office would remain so, and certain uses (mostly entertainment and adult-related) would not be permitted.



been designated as being within the proposed IPZ Buffer Zone where new live/work projects would be a conditional use. However, as a “pipeline” project, with an application on file prior to April 22, 1999, the proposed project would be subject to staff initiated Discretionary Review before the City Planning Commission rather than a conditional use authorization.

The project site is within the SSO (Service/Secondary Office) Use District. The Planning Code (Sec. 818) states that the SSO District is “designed to accommodate small-scale light industrial, home, and business services, art activities, live/work units, and small-scale office space large-floor-plate ‘back office’ for sales and clerical work forces.” General commercial, office, most retail, live/work, service and light industrial uses are principal permitted uses. In the SSO District, the maximum permitted floor area ratio (FAR) is 4:1 for properties within a 65 to 80-foot height district. As a live/work and retail building with a proposed FAR of 4:1, the proposed project is a principal permitted use in the SSO District and is within the basic permitted FAR.

The project is located within the 65-X Height and Bulk District, which establishes a 65-foot height limit and no bulk restrictions. Within South of Market districts, additional building height, up to five feet above the otherwise applicable height limit, is permitted by Planning Code Section 260(b)(2)(O) for projects where the uppermost floor of the building is to be solely occupied by live/work units. As such, the 70-foot height of the proposed project would be permitted under the Planning Code.<sup>2</sup>

The proposed project, a new live/work building of approximately 134,000 gross sq. ft. (including about 15,000 sq. ft. of retail space), would result in an increase in intensity of existing land uses on the project site, replacing the existing buildings on the site that together consist of approximately 53,000 sq. ft. and have been almost completely vacant for years. However, the project would not alter the general land use pattern of the immediate area, which includes several live/work buildings. In addition, the project vicinity is undergoing a shift from primarily warehouse and light industrial uses to live/work and other residential uses, and office uses. The proposed project would be in keeping with the direction of the neighborhood’s redevelopment. The project would also not disrupt or divide the neighborhood, since it would be achieved within the existing block configuration.

The construction of live/work units in the South of Market area and other areas of the City has raised concerns about light industrial businesses being displaced by recent live/work developments. The proposed live/work project would cause displacement of a bar and a restaurant and would not directly displace any industrial or residential uses. In a situation in which there may be competition between permitted land uses in an area where one use may have an economic advantage over the other(s),

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<sup>2</sup> Planning Code Section 260(b)(2)(A) also allows building parapets (as well as railings and catwalks) to exceed the otherwise established height limit up to an additional four feet. The proposed project has a four-foot parapet above its 70-foot roof level.

displacement of one use by another would be a socio-economical impact resulting primarily from market forces. In the purview of CEQA, only when a proposed use has a potential significant adverse effect on the physical environment would it be appropriate to call the effect of the proposed use a significant environmental impact. As such, there would be no significant environmental effect related to the displacement of existing businesses on the project site.

## B. HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

The proposed project would involve demolition of the two existing structures located on the project site, 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street (see Figure 7 for photographs of the two buildings). The following discussion regarding historic architectural resources describes each of these two structures, considers their status as historic resources under CEQA, and assesses the potential effects of their proposed demolition.

### SETTING

#### *PROJECT SITE*

Very little information is available regarding the history and architectural background of the 650 Fourth Street building. It is known that the building was constructed in 1907, soon after the 1906 fire and earthquake that devastated much of the city. The architect of the building was E.W. Hyde, who designed the 100-room hotel for Mrs. Emma L. McQuaide. The wooden structure was built in the Edwardian style, and includes bay windows on the upper three levels on both the Bluxome and Fourth Street elevations, a detailed classical cornice, double-hung windows, and rounded cantilevered bay windows above the first level. Ionic pilasters or columns originally located on the ground-floor along of the Fourth Street elevation have since been removed and replaced with incompatible stucco and wood exterior treatments (see Figures 8 and 9). The plan for the building included a bar and dining room on the ground floor, spaces that are today still used for those purposes.

The building suffered fire damage in 1982, including substantial damage to the roof, that has not been repaired. The upper three levels, oriented around a central stairway and lightwell, were subdivided into numerous small rooms, and are in a dilapidated state due, in part, to the building being exposed to the elements and water entering through the damaged roof. Total fire damage is estimated by the project sponsor at approximately \$500,000. Other than the restaurant and bar, the building is vacant. The exterior of the upper three levels has recently been painted, although signs of deterioration are readily evident.

The building also has an inefficient floor plan with narrow hallways and very small rooms that would make reuse of the structure extremely difficult without completely reconstructing the interior. In addition, due to the building's age, the nature of its original use (a hotel), and damage resulting from the fire, the building would require extensive work to bring it up to current building code standards.

The 690-698 Fourth Street building<sup>3</sup> was built in 1926 as a showroom and warehouse of the American Radiator Company, manufacturers of radiators, steam heaters and vacuum cleaners. The company was based in New York and was one of the largest radiator manufacturers in the country. American Radiator first opened an office in San Francisco's Monadnock Building in 1906 or 1907, probably in response to

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<sup>3</sup> The history and physical description of the building is based primarily on the California Department of Parks and Recreation Form 523A completed in April, 1996.





View Looking South



View Looking West

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

650-690 Fourth Street / 990312 ■

**Figure 7**  
Existing Views of Project Site





View from Fourth Street Looking South



Fourth Street Elevation

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

650-690 Fourth Street / 990.312 ■

**Figure 8**  
Existing Views of  
650 Fourth Street





Bluxome Street Elevation



Bluxome Street Elevation



the business generated by the rebuilding of the city after the 1906 earthquake and fire. In 1911, their business had increased to the point that they needed their own warehouse and showroom, and they leased and modified the warehouse at 699 Second Street for that purpose. In 1926, they built the 690-698 Fourth Street building and moved into it.

American Radiator appears to have been one of two principal radiator companies in San Francisco, the other being United States Radiator. American Radiator remained in San Francisco until the 1940s, and in 1949 the building was occupied by E.R. Squibb and Sons, a wholesale drug manufacturer. Subsequently, the building has been occupied by an importer, a printer/lithographer, and more recently manufacturer of postage devices. The building has been vacant since 1992.

The 690-698 Fourth Street building is a two-story rectangular warehouse structure that fills its entire approximately 92 foot x 190 foot lot, providing approximately 35,000 square feet of open loft space. Constructed of fireproof reinforced concrete with concrete columns, beams, floors, walls, and roof, the building is a simple structure with a minimal exterior decoration. The concrete structural frame is articulated on the exterior with a more massive look at the ends to frame each facade (see Figure 10). In addition, there is an overlay of exposed concrete decorative detail with Gothic and Moderne references, including a main entrance arch, cornice bands at the end pavilions, and piers treated like buttresses. Spandrel and parapet panels are decorated with veneers of brick in varied patterns. Most revealing of the building's original use and tenant are the cast logos, each consisting of an overlay of an "A," "R," and "C" for American Radiator Company, in the parapets of the end blocks (see Figure 11). The overall visual impression of the building is of a slightly embellished industrial structure.

The architect of the building was San Francisco engineer H. J. Brunier, a leading structural engineer of the period who was responsible for many of the major office buildings in San Francisco in the first part of the 20th Century. Other well-known local buildings that Brunier was responsible for include the Russ Building, Standard Oil Building, Hunter-Dulin Building, Commercial Union Building, the Federal Reserve Bank, Balfour Building, Shell Building, and Hills Brothers Building. Brunier also designed many buildings in Los Angeles, including many at the University of California, Los Angeles. Most of the buildings Brunier worked on were as the structural engineer and not as the architect. In the few buildings for which he was known to have designed the facades as well as done the engineering, they are done with attention to detail and with a clearly expressed relation between structure and function.

Today, all of the vacant building's door openings have been boarded up, most of its windows are either broken or boarded up, and graffiti covers much of its two facades, primarily along the street and in the second-floor windows.

Despite the building's somewhat haggard appearance, only slight alterations appear to have been made to its facades. Two original unadorned secondary entrances (likely loading docks), one on Fourth Street and one on Townsend Street, have been modified with the installation of industrial roll-away doors. A third such entrance (on Fourth Street), has been filled in with glass block (see Figure 10). Otherwise, the





Fourth Street Elevation



Townsend Street Elevation

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

650-690 Fourth Street / 990312 ■

## Figure 10

Existing Views of  
690-698 Fourth Street





Detail on Townsend Street Elevation



Detail on Townsend Street Elevation

SOURCE: Environmental Science Associates

650-690 Fourth Street / 990312 ■

# Figure 11

Existing Views of  
690-698 Fourth Street

building's exterior, including its gothic-inspired pedestrian entrances, cast logos, brick spandrels and parapets, and patterned brickwork, appears to be intact.

In contrast, the building's interior has been completely stripped of its original finishings, detailing, and other improvements. In addition, the ground-level, once covered by a concrete slab floor, is now loose exposed sand. According to the project sponsor, rehabilitation of the 690-698 Fourth Street building would require an expenditure of approximately \$3.5 million to replace the piling/foundation system, in addition to costs for electrical, plumbing and other code-required building components.

### ***RATING BUILDINGS OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC IMPORTANCE***

Neither the 650 Fourth Street or 690-698 Fourth Street buildings are designated as local landmarks. However, both buildings appear in historic resources surveys of the area, as described below.

Between 1974 and 1976, the San Francisco Planning Department conducted a citywide survey of architecturally "significant"<sup>4</sup> buildings, rating approximately the best 10 percent of San Francisco's buildings. The inventory assessed the architectural importance of the surveyed structures from the standpoint of overall design and particular design features. Both contemporary and older buildings were included, but historical associations were not considered. Each building was given two numerical ratings, one for architectural quality and one for overall architectural significance, urban design context, and environment significance. (The latter rating is most commonly referred to.) The ratings ranged from a low of "0" to a high of "5." In the estimation of the inventory participants, buildings rated "3" or higher represent approximately the best two percent of the City's architecture. The 690-698 Fourth Street building was rated "0" in the 1976 citywide survey. The 650 Fourth Street building was not rated in the 1976 citywide survey.

The South of Market Plan, an area plan within the San Francisco General Plan, includes Objective 7, Policy 4, which states, "Preserve individual architecturally and/or historically significant buildings which contribute to the area's identity, give visual orientation, and which impart a sense of continuity with San Francisco's past." Approximately 30 such structures are designated "Significant Buildings" in the Plan. The Plan states that these buildings "should be considered for designation as City landmarks." Neither of the existing buildings on the project site is considered one of these buildings. The Plan also identified a proposed historic district, since adopted under Article 10 of the Planning Code as the South End Historic District, which occupies all or part of seven blocks to the north and east of the project site. The project site is not within the South End Historic District.

San Francisco Architectural Heritage (Heritage) surveyed structures in the greater downtown area, including the South of Market District in 1979. The Heritage survey employed 13 rating categories in four headings that are based on criteria of the National Trust for Historic Preservation: architecture,

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<sup>4</sup> The word significant in the context of historic architectural resources denotes a resource's importance, in that context, and is differentiated from its use in the context of CEQA review, where it denotes an effect that constitutes a substantial adverse change in the environment.



history, environment and integrity;<sup>5</sup> these same categories were later adopted for the survey conducted in the development of San Francisco's Downtown Plan.

The particular form of the Heritage survey was based on a model put forth by Harold Kalman in his book *The Evaluation of Historic Buildings, A Manual*, published by the Canadian government in 1978. Summary ratings from "A" to "D" were assigned to each building on the basis of evaluation in the 13 rating categories, with "A" representing buildings of Highest Importance. "B"-rated buildings are of Major Importance, "C"-rated buildings are of Contextual Importance, and "D"-rated structures are of Minor or No Importance. Buildings not rated by Heritage are those that have been built or suffered insensitive exterior remodelings since 1945. The 650 Fourth Street building was rated a "C" and the 690-698 Fourth Street building was rated "C\*\*." In *Splendid Survivors*, a 1979 book that profiled San Francisco's downtown architecture, Heritage described "C"-rated buildings as follows:

- C. Contextual Importance. Buildings which are distinguished by their scale, materials, and compositional treatment, cornice, and other features. They provide the setting for more important buildings and they add visual richness and character to the downtown area. Many C-group buildings may be eligible for the National Register or are part of historic districts.

The two asterisks that follow the "C" rating of the 690-698 Fourth Street building indicates that the building has the potential for an upgrade of its rating if further research is conducted on the building or damaging alterations are reversed. Neither building is profiled in *Splendid Survivors*.

In its statewide inventory of historical resources, the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) lists the 690-698 Fourth Street building as a "2S2," meaning the building has been determined eligible for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places* (National Register) as a separate property. Information in the SHPO database indicates that the 2S2 rating is based on an assessment done as part of a Federal Transportation Administration analysis in conjunction with the Caltrain Downtown Extension project EIR/EIS published in 1997. The 690-698 Fourth Street building is located within the Caltrain Extension's Area of Potential Effect (APE), which explains why the building was surveyed. The 650 Fourth Street building was not located within the APE, was not analyzed as part of that survey, is not listed in the SHPO database, and therefore has no rating regarding its eligibility (or lack thereof) for the National Register. Because the 690-698 Fourth Street building was determined eligible for the National Register as part of a consensus determination with the Federal Transit Administration, the building is included in the *California Register of Historic Resources*.

<sup>5</sup> The 13 categories are essentially those used by the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage (renamed San Francisco Architectural Heritage) in its book *Splendid Survivors: Architecture* (Style, Construction, Age, Architect, Design, Interior); History (Person, Event, Patterns); Environment (Continuity, Setting, Landmark); and Integrity.

## IMPACTS

### *SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA*

CEQA Section 21084.1 states that “a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” This section defines “historical resource” as one that is listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources, and states that resources listed in a local register of historical resources or deemed significant<sup>6</sup> pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 “are presumed to be historically or culturally significant . . . . unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant.” The State CEQA Guidelines also include, in the definition of historical resource, those resources identified as significant in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g) (Guidelines Sec. 15064.5(a)(2)). A “substantial adverse change” is defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1 as “demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of an historical resource would be impaired.”

A “local register of historic resources” is defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1 as “a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution.”

Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g) states:

A resource identified as significant in an historical resource survey may be listed in the California Register if the survey meets all of the following criteria:

- (1) The survey has been or will be included in the State Historic Resources Inventory.
- (2) The survey and the survey documentation were prepared in accordance with office procedures and requirements.
- (3) The resource is evaluated and determined by the office to have a significance rating of Category 1 to 5 on DPR Form 523.
- (4) If the survey is five or more years old at the time of its nomination for inclusion in the California Register, the survey is updated to identify historical resources which have become eligible or ineligible due to changed circumstances or further documentation and those which have been demolished or altered in a manner that substantially diminishes the significance of the resource.

### *IMPACT ASSESSMENT*

As noted above, the 690-698 Fourth Street building is listed in the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) inventory (DPR Form 523) as Category 2S2, meaning that it has been determined eligible for the

<sup>6</sup> The word significant in this instance refers to importance as a historic architectural resource, and is differentiated from its use under CEQA, to denote a substantial adverse change in the environment.



*National Register of Historic Places* (National Register) by consensus determination between the SHPO and the Federal Transit Administration. As a result, the building is included in the *California Register of Historic Places* (California Register). In light of the above, the 690-698 Fourth Street building is considered to be an historical resource under CEQA, and demolition of the building would constitute a “substantial adverse change” that would be a considered significant adverse environmental effect.

The 650 Fourth Street building is not listed in and has not been determined eligible for listing in either the National Register or the California Register. The building does not appear in the State Historic Resources Inventory and is also not listed in a local register of historical resources as defined by Public Resources Code Section 5020.1. The building is listed in the San Francisco Heritage survey, which found the building to be of “contextual importance” and not of “A– Highest Importance” or “B–major Importance.” The 650 Fourth Street building is of an architectural style that is common in San Francisco, particularly in some of the city’s older residential neighborhoods, and has lost much of its architectural integrity as a result of severe fire damage. While the 650 Fourth Street building is clearly a handsome older building, there is no evidence that it meets the definition of an historical resource under CEQA and its demolition would not be considered a significant adverse environmental effect.

## C. TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

### SETTING

Within the project vicinity, The Embarcadero, Third, Fourth, King and Bryant Streets are designated in the Transportation Element of the San Francisco General Plan as Transit Important Streets.<sup>7</sup> On these streets, priority is given to transit vehicles over autos during commute and business hours on weekdays usually along curbside lanes. The Embarcadero, Third, Fourth, Sixth, King, and Bryant Streets and portions of Brannan Street are designated in the Transportation Element as Major Arterials, which the General Plan defines as “cross-town thoroughfares whose primary function is to link districts within the City and to distribute traffic from and to the freeways.” Third, Fourth, and King Streets are Neighborhood Commercial Pedestrian Streets. The Embarcadero (Route 5), Third Street (Route 5), King Street (Route 5), Fifth Street (Route 19), and Townsend Street (Route 36) are designated as Citywide Bicycle Routes in the Transportation Element. King Street and The Embarcadero have separate bicycle lanes, while the other bicycle routes are Class III routes, meaning bicyclists and motorists share the roadway width. All major intersections in the vicinity of the project site are traffic signal controlled; minor intersections, including Bluxome and Fourth and Bluxome and Fifth Streets, have stop signs only on the minor streets.

The Embarcadero has three continuous lanes in each direction between Howard Street and Broadway and two lanes in each direction south of Howard Street. An exclusive rail right-of-way for the MUNI Metro exists from Folsom to King Streets. On-street parking is restricted during the peak period. Brannan Street has two travel lanes in each direction with on-street unmetered and metered parking. Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Streets have four travel lanes and on-street metered and unmetered parking on both sides of the street. King Street has four lanes and parking on both sides of the street as well as MUNI Metro tracks within an exclusive median. King Street serves as a boulevard connecting The Embarcadero and the I-280 on- and off-ramps at Fifth Street. Townsend Street has one lane in each direction between the Embarcadero and Second Street and between Fourth and Eighth Streets, and two lanes between Second and Fourth Streets. Townsend Street’s parking includes both metered and unmetered spaces. Bryant Street is the primary access route to and from eastbound I-80 and the Bay Bridge and has five lanes in and parking on both sides of the street.

Currently, stops for approximately seven MUNI bus lines and one light rail line are in the vicinity of the project site. The nearest BART stations are located at Powell Street and Montgomery Street stations on Market Street, one mile to 1.25 miles northwest of the site. AC Transit, SamTrans, and Golden Gate Transit are accessible at the Transbay Transit Terminal approximately one mile from the site (a 15 minute walk); multiple MUNI bus lines connect the block on which the site is located to the

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<sup>7</sup> This chapter of the EIR is a summary of the transportation study prepared by Wilbur Smith Associates, entitled *650-690 Fourth Street Transportation Study*, August 17, 1999. This report is available for review at the San Francisco Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street, as part of Project File No. 99.864E.

Transbay Terminal. Caltrain is located at the Fourth/Townsend depot, directly across Fourth Street from the project site.

Surveys of existing public off-street parking capacity and occupancy were taken in the area bounded by Bryant Street to the north, Third Street to the east, Sixth Street to the west, and Townsend Street to the south. There are approximately 923 parking spaces available to the general public within the study area, with mid-afternoon weekday occupancy levels at about 78 percent. On-street parking in the project area is available, although generally well-utilized.

Based on field observations during the weekday p.m. peak, sidewalk and crosswalk conditions were both observed to be operating at slightly constrained conditions with minor conflicts between pedestrians and somewhat reduced speeds. In addition, pedestrian difficulties occur next to the MUNI bus shelter located on Fourth Street in front of the project site due to the reduced sidewalk width.

## IMPACTS

### *SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA*

City policy has been that a project is considered to have a significant effect on the environment if it would cause a signalized intersection to deteriorate to an unacceptable level (i.e., from LOS D or better to LOS E or F), interfere with existing transportation systems causing substantial alteration to circulation patterns or causing major traffic hazards, or contribute substantially to cumulative traffic increases that cause intersections that would otherwise operate at acceptable levels to deteriorate to unacceptable levels. The City has not formally adopted significance criteria for potential impacts related to transit, but City policy has been that a project would have a significant effect if it would cause a substantial increase in transit demand that cannot be accommodated by existing or proposed transit capacity, resulting in unacceptable levels of transit service.

Regarding parking, San Francisco General Plan policies emphasize the importance of public transit use and discourage the provision of facilities that encourage automobile use. Therefore, the creation of or increase in parking demand resulting from a proposed project that cannot be met by existing or proposed parking facilities would not itself be considered a significant effect. The City has not adopted significance criteria for pedestrian or bicycle impacts. For this analysis, the project would have a significant effect if it were to result in substantial pedestrian overcrowding, create particularly hazardous conditions for pedestrians or bicyclists, or otherwise substantially interfere with pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. Generally, construction-period transportation impacts would not be considered significant because they would be temporary.



## IMPACT ANALYSIS

Project-specific impacts are described here, as are projected cumulative impacts for the year 2015, based on analysis for the Mission Bay Final SEIR.<sup>8</sup> Because the project vicinity includes a number of projects that are currently under review or already approved but not yet built, this analysis also reports traffic, transit, and parking impacts of a so-called “interim cumulative analysis,” which represents conditions that are anticipated to exist if all of these projects are completed. Although there is no definitive time frame for completion of these projects currently under construction, approved, or under review, the analysis assumes that they would be completed by about 2005.

### Travel Demand Analysis

The project would generate about 2,747 net new person trips per day, with a total of about 180 net new person trips during the p.m. peak hour, of which about 35 would be vehicle trips,<sup>9</sup> 40 would be transit trips, and the remaining 80 trips would be walking trips or by other modes such as bicycle, motorcycle and taxi.<sup>10</sup>

### Traffic Impacts

Four of the five signalized study intersections studied (Fourth/Brannan, Fourth/Bluxome, Fourth/Townsend, and Fifth/Bluxome) currently operate at good (LOS B<sup>11</sup> or better) service levels during the p.m. peak hour. The remaining intersection, Fourth and King, operates at LOS D. With the addition of project traffic, operating conditions would not worsen from existing conditions at any of the five study intersections. As such, no significant impact would occur.

With traffic generated by the projects accounted for in the interim cumulative analysis, conditions at the majority of intersections would remain acceptable (LOS D or better), but operations at Second and Brannan Streets and at Third and Brannan Streets (neither of which are study intersections for the proposed project) would deteriorate to LOS F. Deteriorated conditions at these intersections could be improved to LOS D with restriping of the roadway to provide exclusive left-turn pockets and providing associated signal improvements. The project contribution to this decline in level of service would represent less than 2% of the increase in traffic volumes at these intersections, and conditions at these intersections would degrade with or without the proposed project’s contribution. As such, the project

<sup>8</sup> *Mission Bay Final Supplemental EIR*, (Case No. 96.771E). This report is available for review at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street.

<sup>9</sup> The 35 vehicle trips represent about 60 person-trips by vehicle; the number of vehicle trips is less than the number of person trips by vehicle because some person trips are made in vehicles carrying more than one person.

<sup>10</sup> Travel demand for the proposed project was calculated on the basis of trip generation rates, and p.m. peak-hour percentage of daily traffic, for Residential and Retail uses presented in the San Francisco Planning Department, *Guidelines for Environmental Review: Transportation Impacts* (Appendix 1).

<sup>11</sup> Traffic operations are characterized using a p.m. peak-hour level of service (LOS) analysis, which provides a standardized means of rating an intersection’s operating characteristics on the basis of traffic volumes, intersection capacity and delays. LOS A represents free-flow conditions, with little or no delay, while LOS F represents congested conditions, with extremely long delays; LOS D (moderately high delays) is considered the lowest acceptable level in San Francisco.



contribution would not be considerable and the proposed project would not have a significant impact. Under longer-range cumulative (2015) traffic conditions, all five study intersections levels would operate at LOS D or better. The intersections of Fourth/Townsend and Fourth/King include mitigation measures as developed in the *Mission Bay Final SEIR* and would operate at LOS C and LOS D, respectively. The intersections of Fourth/Bluxôme and Fifth/Bluxome would operate at LOS C and LOS B, respectively. The fifth study intersection, Fourth/Brannan, would operate at LOS C. Under cumulative conditions, ten intersections (none of which are project study intersections) would deteriorate to unacceptable levels when compared to existing conditions. As with the interim cumulative analysis, however, the proposed project's contribution to the worsening of intersection conditions would not be considerable and the cumulative degradation of conditions would occur with or without the proposed project. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant impact related to traffic.

## Transit

The project would generate approximately 40 net new p.m. peak-hour transit trips. Nearly all of these trips would be on MUNI, and would be dispersed over the MUNI routes that serve the project area. The remaining trips would be on Caltrain to the Peninsula.

With completion of the projects in the interim cumulative analysis (including operation of the Third Street light rail line), outbound MUNI ridership (towards Market Street from the project vicinity crossing the China Basin/South Beach area screenline) would increase by about 965 p.m. peak-hour MUNI trips.<sup>12</sup> The capacity utilization<sup>13</sup> in the p.m. peak hour would increase, although not substantially, meaning adequate capacity would exist for MUNI ridership generated in the South Beach/China Basin area. This would also be true for 2015 cumulative conditions.

Because of the relatively limited effect of the proposed project in the context of cumulative growth, the conditions in the interim and 2015 cumulative scenarios would occur with or without the proposed project. The proposed project would have a minimal contribution to cumulative transit ridership and would therefore not have a considerable effect. Therefore, the project would not have a significant impact on transit services and capacity.

## Parking

The proposed project would provide about 73 off-street parking stalls and would exceed the Planning Code requirement of 65 spaces, 23 for retail uses and 42 for the live/work units. The project's 3 spaces for disabled-accessible parking and 6 bicycle parking spaces would meet the Code requirements. In March, 1998, the San Francisco Planning Commission adopted Resolution Number 14556, which created a Planning Department policy that one parking space be provided for each live/work unit. The proposed

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<sup>12</sup> The interim cumulative analysis is based on p.m. peak-hour conditions, rather than p.m., peak-period conditions reported for the project. In addition, the project transit analysis includes only MUNI lines that serve the project site, so the two analyses are not directly comparable.

<sup>13</sup> Capacity utilization is the aggregate number of passengers divided by the aggregate design capacity of the transit vehicles, and may include varying numbers of standees, depending on the transit carrier.

project would include four fewer spaces than the 77 spaces (23 for the retail uses and 54 for the live/work units) required to comply with this policy.

Parking access to the basement parking garage would be through a single entrance/exit on Bluxome Street, via a new driveway and in the middle of the Bluxome Street frontage. Access to the nine street-level parking spaces would be through a curb cut along Fourth Street. The project would create long-term parking demand for about 91 net new parking spaces, and short-term parking demand for about 27 net new equivalent daily spaces, for a total parking demand of about 118 daily spaces. The estimated parking demand would exceed the proposed supply by 45 project spaces. However, nearby off-street parking facilities, including lots on Townsend between Third and Fourth Streets, Sixth between Bryant and Brannan Streets, and Bryant between Fifth and Sixth Streets, currently operate at less than 80 percent of capacity and would be able to accommodate the project's additional demand.

With completion of the projects included in the interim cumulative analysis, a total of 3,824 new spaces would be provided and about 1,367 public parking spaces would be eliminated, creating a total supply of 6,485 spaces. In addition, in conjunction with Caltrans' reconstruction of the San Francisco approach to the Bay Bridge, there would be temporary losses of between 500 and 2,000 parking spaces under and adjacent to the freeway. Together, the interim cumulative projects would generate demand for about 7,357 parking spaces, meaning that there would be a parking utilization of 114 percent, representing a shortfall of 872 spaces. If the parking shortfall were to overlap with the freeway retrofit (scheduled for between 2000 and 2006), the shortfall would be greater. Some of the parking shortfall could be met on-street or outside of the area, however it is not anticipated that it would accommodate the entire 872 space deficit.

*San Francisco General Plan* policies emphasize the importance of public transit use and discourage the provision of facilities that encourage automobile use to minimize the environmental impact of traffic congestion, noise, and air quality associated with unconstrained vehicle use. Also, drivers met with few parking options tend to modify their behavior and park further from their destination, travel to the area at times when more parking is available, or switch modes of transportation. Therefore, the creation of or increase in parking demand resulting from a proposed project that cannot be met by existing or proposed parking facilities, while inconvenient to persons choosing to drive to the area, would not be considered a significant effect.

## Loading

Under *Planning Code* Section 152, the proposed project would be required to provide one off-street (standard truck) freight loading space for the proposed retail land uses.<sup>14</sup> As such, the proposed off-street loading supply would meet the *Planning Code* requirement of one space. The project would generate a loading demand for less than one loading space during both the average and peak loading hours. As such, the proposed off-street loading supply would exceed the demand.

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<sup>14</sup> Planning Code Table 152: Off-Street Freight Loading Spaces Required (Outside C-3 and South of Market Districts). Retail uses of 10,001-60,000 gross sq. ft. require one loading space.



## Pedestrian and Bicycle Conditions

The primary pedestrian access for the project would be on Fourth Street, where there would be multiple entrances to the ground-level retail space and access to an elevator lobby for the live/work units. The project would add about 60 peak-hour walking trips,<sup>15</sup> a majority of which would be pedestrians already in the area. As such, the actual increase in pedestrians would be lower. A majority of project-generated pedestrian trips would be on Fourth Street and could be accommodated on the existing sidewalk and crosswalks adjacent to the project site and would not substantially affect current sidewalk conditions.

As a component of the proposed project, new sidewalks would be constructed along the Bluxome and Townsend Street frontages of the project site. The provision of these sidewalks would increase the pedestrian facilities in the area and would improve pedestrian circulation and operating conditions on both Bluxome and Townsend Streets.

The proposed project would result in an increase in bicycle activity in the area and some portion of those trips would be new bicycle trips during the weekday p.m. peak hour. With the current and projected traffic vehicle levels on the streets in the vicinity of the proposed project, bicycle travel would not be substantial enough to affect bicycle travel in the area. Since the proposed project would generate relatively few vehicle trips during the p.m. peak hour, there would not be a substantial increase in vehicular-bicycle conflicts.

## Construction Impacts

During the projected 12-month construction period, temporary and intermittent traffic and transit impacts would result from truck movements to and from the project site. Trucks would be staged along Townsend Street adjacent to the project site in a manner consistent with traffic management strategies established in consultation with City staff.

During various stages of construction, it is anticipated that the sidewalk along the Fourth Street frontage would be closed temporarily. The construction contractor would need to plan the temporary sidewalk closure in coordination with City staff, particularly if a walkway would need to be constructed within the adjacent MUNI bus stop.

Throughout the construction period, there would be a flow of construction-related trucks into and out of the site. The impact of construction truck traffic would be a temporary lessening of the capacities of streets due to the slower movement and larger turning radii of trucks. This would affect both traffic and MUNI operations. The average number of construction-related trucks per day would be a maximum of 20 to 30 per day. It is anticipated that a majority of the construction-related truck traffic would use I-280 and I-80.

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<sup>15</sup> The proposed project would also add about 15 "other" trips, meaning trips other than auto, transit, or pedestrian.

The addition of worker-related vehicle or transit-trips would not substantially affect transportation conditions. Construction workers would cause a temporary parking demand. Existing off-street parking facilities would be expected to have capacity to accommodate this increase in demand. In addition, some workers would could take transit to the project site.

In summary, the project would not result in a significant impact on traffic, transit, circulation or parking.



## D. GROWTH INDUCEMENT

In general, a project would be considered growth-inducing if its implementation would result in substantial population increases and/or new development that might not occur if the project were not approved and implemented. The proposed project, as an infill development of a live/work and retail structure in an urbanized area replacing an existing structure, would not be expected to substantially alter development patterns in the South of Market neighborhood or elsewhere in San Francisco. The net increase in floor area would be approximately 80,000 gross square feet, compared to existing conditions. This net change would not generate substantial population growth or concentration in the neighborhood, city or region. It would not introduce new, additional housing into the project area or neighborhood. Located in an urban area, the project would not necessitate or induce the extension of municipal infrastructure. In view of the above, there is no reason to believe that the project would result in additional development in the project site vicinity that would not otherwise occur.

## CHAPTER IV

### MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE THE POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

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In the course of project planning and design, measures have been identified that would reduce or eliminate potential significant environmental impacts of the proposed project. Some of these measures have been, or would be, voluntarily adopted by the project sponsor or project architect and contractor and thus are proposed; some are under consideration. Implementation of some may be the responsibility of other agencies. Measures under consideration or those that may have been rejected by the project sponsor may be required by the Planning Commission as conditions of project approval, if the project is approved. Each mitigation measure and its status are discussed below.

There are several items required by law that would serve to mitigate potential significant impacts; they are summarized here for informational purposes. These measures include: no use of mirrored glass on the building to reduce glare, as per City Planning Commission Resolution 9212; limitation of construction-related noise levels, pursuant to the San Francisco Noise Ordinance (Article 29 of the San Francisco Police Code, 1972); compliance with Chapter 36 of the San Francisco Building Code, Work Practices for Exterior Lead-Based Paint; and observance of State and federal OSHA safety requirements related to handling and disposal of other hazardous materials, such as asbestos.

Measures that are not required by legislation but would serve to mitigate significant environmental impacts appear below. Mitigation measures preceded by an asterisk (\*) are from the Initial Study (see Appendix A).

#### NOISE

#### MEASURES PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

- \*• The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to limit pile driving activity such that it results in the least disturbance to occupants and users of adjacent and nearby properties. Implementation of this measure may require the construction contractor(s) to obtain a permit for nighttime work from the Director of the Department of Public Works if pile driving during nighttime hours would be the least disruptive to these occupants and users.
- \*• The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to predrill holes for the piles (if feasible based on the soil type on the project site) to the maximum feasible depth to minimize noise and vibration from pile driving.
- \*• The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to use state-of-the-art muffled and shielded pile drivers.

## CONSTRUCTION AIR QUALITY

### MEASURE PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

- \*• The project sponsor would require the contractor(s) to spray exterior demolition sites with water during demolition, excavation and construction activity; spray unpaved exterior construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other material; cover trucks hauling debris, soil, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during demolition and construction at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions. Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor would require that the contractor(s) obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose. The project sponsors would require the project the contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as a prohibition on idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementation of specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### MEASURE PROPOSED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

- \*• Should evidence of archaeological resources of potential significance be found during ground disturbance, the project sponsor would immediately notify the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) and would suspend any excavation which the ERO determined could damage such archaeological resources. Excavation or construction activities which might damage discovered cultural resources would be suspended for a total maximum of four weeks over the course of construction.

After notifying the ERO, the project sponsor would select an archaeologist to assist the Office of Environmental Review in determining the significance of the find. The archaeologist would prepare a draft report containing an assessment of the potential significance of the find and recommendations for what measures should be implemented to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources. Based on this report, the ERO would recommend specific additional mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor.

Mitigation measures might include a site security program, additional on-site investigations by the archaeologist, and/or documentation, preservation, and recovery of cultural materials. Finally, the archaeologist would prepare a draft report documenting the cultural resources that were discovered, an evaluation as to their significance, and a description as to how any archaeological testing, exploration and/or recovery program was conducted.

Copies of all draft reports prepared according to this mitigation measure would be sent first and directly to the ERO for review. Following approval by the ERO, copies of the final report(s) would be sent by the archaeologist directly to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center. Three copies of the final archaeology report(s) shall be submitted to the Office of Environmental



Review, accompanied by copies of the transmittals documenting its distribution to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center.

## **HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES**

The following measures would reduce but not eliminate significant adverse effects related to demolition of the 690-698 Fourth Street building.

### **MEASURES IDENTIFIED IN THIS REPORT**

- Prior to demolition of the 690-698 Fourth Street building, the project sponsor could employ an architectural historian to document the building and its history in greater detail than has been done to date. The project sponsor would submit that documentation, along with modified-format Historic American Buildings Survey drawings of the buildings, to the History Room of the San Francisco Main Library, the Secretary of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, and the California Historical Society.
- To promote recognition of the building to be demolished, the project sponsor could install on or near the proposed structure a plaque and/or other monument memorializing the 690-698 Fourth Street building to be demolished. A plaque could be mounted on the front of the new building to provide pedestrians with both a photographic image of and historical text about the 690-698 Fourth Street building. Design and placement of such plaque would be reviewed and approved by the Planning Department in consultation with the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board.
- The project sponsor could reuse architectural elements from one or both of the existing buildings, such as the American Radiator Company parapet medallions from the existing 690-698 Fourth Street building, in the design of new building.

These mitigation measures would reduce but not eliminate the project's significant impact on historic architectural resources.

## CHAPTER V

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### SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED

In accordance with Section 21067 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and with Sections 15040, 15081 and 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this chapter is to identify impacts that could not be eliminated or reduced to an insignificant level by mitigation measures included as part of the project, or by other mitigation measures that could be implemented, as described in Chapter IV, Mitigation Measures, pp. 42-44.

This chapter is subject to final determination by the Planning Commission as part of its certification process for the EIR. The Final EIR will be revised, if necessary, to reflect the findings of the Commission.

With the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined in Chapter IV, Mitigation Measures, pp. 42-44, all potential significant impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level, with the following exception. The proposed project would demolish the buildings at 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street. The 690-698 Fourth Street building has been formally determined eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places*, is included in the *California Register of Historic Places*, and meets the definition of an historic architectural resource under CEQA. Thus, the proposed project would have a significant, unavoidable impact on historic resources.

Whether or not the project is approved, traffic volumes and transit loadings in the site vicinity are projected to increase. Cumulative increases in traffic congestion may in turn cause cumulative increases in criteria air pollutants and a degradation of air quality. Given the proposed project's scope, its incremental contribution to these potential cumulative effects would not be considered "considerable" or significant.

# CHAPTER VI

## ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

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This chapter identifies alternatives to the proposed project and discusses environmental impacts associated with each alternative. Project decision-makers must adopt one of the following alternatives, instead of approving the proposed project, unless the alternatives are found to be infeasible based on substantial information in the record. Information in the record may include, but would not be limited to, this EIR.

### A. ALTERNATIVE A: NO PROJECT

This alternative would entail no change to the site, which would remain in its existing condition. The 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street buildings would not be demolished, and the proposed live/work and retail structure would not be constructed. Unless the existing buildings on the site were upgraded to accommodate other tenants, there would be no temporary construction impacts, such as noise, dust and construction traffic.

This alternative would not result in any increase in travel to and from the project site, thus avoiding traffic-related effects of the proposed project. This alternative would also not cause any of the other impacts associated with the proposed project as described in the Initial Study, such as those related to the minor temporary increases in noise and air quality effects due to construction, minor increase in shadow, and potential hazardous materials effects.

This alternative would not result in demolition of 650 Fourth Street or 690-698 Fourth Street, a structure determined eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* and an historical resource under CEQA. Therefore this alternative would not result in the significant unavoidable impact to historical resources.

The 650 Fourth Street and 690-698 Fourth Street buildings, which contain a total of approximately 53,000 square feet, are vacant except for a ground-floor restaurant and bar. Full reoccupancy of these buildings would generate incrementally greater traffic and air pollutant emissions, compared to existing conditions, but less than the proposed project. However, whether or when such occupancy would occur is purely speculative.

### B. ALTERNATIVE B: PRESERVATION ALTERNATIVE

Under the Preservation Alternative, the 650 and 690-698 Fourth Street buildings would not be demolished. Instead, both buildings would be rehabilitated and reused. The 650 Fourth Street building would be reused for its original use, as a tourist hotel (50 rooms) with ground-floor retail space



(approximately 5,000 sq.ft.). The 690-698 Fourth Street building would be rehabilitated and converted for use as office space (approximately 38,000 sq.ft.).

Under the Preservation Alternative, the 650 Fourth Street building, including all of the floors and all four walls, would be retained and would be subject to complete interior and exterior rehabilitation. In order to bring the building up to current building code requirements, rehabilitation would include: the addition of egress stairs; replacement of building-wide mechanical, electrical, lighting and fire protection systems; a new roof and interior walls; and structural seismic strengthening.

Under the Preservation Alternative, the 690-698 Fourth Street building would also be rehabilitated and its walls and second floor would be retained. Rehabilitation work would conform with the Secretary of Interior Standards. Because the building is completely gutted and includes no service systems, the building would require the replacement of building-wide mechanical, electrical, lighting and fire protection systems. According to a 1997 subsurface survey,<sup>16</sup> at least half of the wooden piles on which the building is supported are in very poor condition and are inadequate to safely support the building's reuse. As such, the existing piles would have to be reinforced or a new foundation would have to be constructed. A new ground-floor would also have to be installed since the concrete slab that covered the first level was removed and never replaced.

The Preservation Alternative would avoid the significant impact of the project resulting from demolition of the 690-698 Fourth Street building, an historical resource under CEQA. This alternative would also avoid the less-than-significant impact of the project resulting from the demolition of the 650 Fourth Street building. Because this alternative would result in less floor space than the proposed project, transportation and related air-quality effects would be incrementally less severe than with the project; these effects would be less than significant, as with the project. Shadow effects, also less than significant with the project, would not occur under this alternative, since there would be no increase in building height.

Temporary construction impacts associated with the project, such as noise, dust and construction traffic, would be less under the Preservation Alternative, since this alternative would involve construction activities at the project site but would not involve demolition of either of the two existing structures. Hazardous building materials would be removed from the existing buildings in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, similar to the project. Other effects described in the Initial Study related to the intensity of development could be incrementally less intensive (e.g., increases in employment) than with the project.

The project sponsor has analyzed the potential for reuse of both of the existing buildings on site. Fire damage and an inefficient floor plan would make reuse of the 650 Fourth Street structure extremely difficult without completely reconstructing the interior. In addition, as discussed above, the building would require extensive work to bring it up to current building code standards. The project sponsor has made a similar conclusion regarding the 690-698 Fourth Street building, which the sponsor has determined would require an expenditure of approximately \$3.5 million just to replace the

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<sup>16</sup> *Investigation of Existing Timber Piles, 660 Fourth Street*, prepared by Subsurface Consultants, Inc., May 21, 1997. This report is available for review at the Planning Department, 1660 Mission Street.

piling/foundation system, in addition to costs for electrical, plumbing and other code-required building components. According to the project sponsor, rehabilitation of these structures would require prohibitive expenditures that would make such a venture economically unrealistic and would not meet most of the sponsor's objectives.

The Preservation Alternative would be environmentally superior to the project because it would avoid the impact of the demolition of the 690-698 Fourth Street building, an historic architectural resource as defined by CEQA.

# CHAPTER VII

## DEIR DISTRIBUTION LIST

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California Archaeological Inventory  
Department of Anthropology  
Sonoma State University  
Rohnert Park, CA 94928  
Attn: Christian Gerike

State Office of Intergovernmental  
Management  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Department of Transportation  
Ofc. of Transportation Planning – B  
P.O. Box 23660  
Oakland, CA 94623-0660  
Attn: Nandini Shridhar

### ***REGIONAL AGENCIES***

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P.O. Box 2050  
Oakland, CA 94604-2050  
Attn: Suzan Ryder

Association of Bay Area Governments  
101 8th Street  
Oakland, CA 94607  
Attn: Jean Pedersen

Regional Water Quality Control Board  
San Francisco Bay Region  
1515 Clay St., Suite 1400  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Attn: Judy Huang

Kenneth Scheidig  
General Counsel's Office  
AC Transit  
1600 Franklin Street  
Oakland, CA 94612

BART  
Planning Division  
800 Madison Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

### ***CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO***

Department of Building Inspection  
1660 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Attn: Frank Chiu, Superintendent

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Bd.  
1660 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Attn: Andrea Green, Secretary

Mayor's Office of Community Devel.  
25 Van Ness Ave., Suite 700  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Marcia Rosen, Director  
Mayor's Office of Housing  
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Maria Ayerdi  
Mayor Office of Economic Devel.  
City Hall, Room 448  
San Francisco, CA 94102

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Hetch Hetchy Water & Power  
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San Francisco, CA 94103  
Attn: John Deakin, Director

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San Francisco, CA 94102  
Attn: Anson B. Moran, General Mgr.

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Attn: Capt. Timothy Hettrich

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Traffic Engineering Division  
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San Francisco, CA 94124-2527  
Attn: Stanley Smith

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465 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94104

San Francisco Conv. & Visitors Bureau  
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Attn: Real Estate Editor

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## ***NEIGHBORING PROPERTY OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS***

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306 Townsend Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #100  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #105  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #110  
San Francisco, Ca 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #112  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #115A  
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Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #115b  
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Occupant  
310 townsend street #180  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #200  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #210  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
650 4<sup>TH</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
652 4<sup>TH</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
654 4<sup>TH</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
5 Bluxome Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
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San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
665 4<sup>TH</sup> Street #2  
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San Francisco, CA 94105-1831

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #230  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #250  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #300  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #310  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #400  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
310 Townsend Street #428  
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Ilse Solbach Etal  
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Occupant  
636 4<sup>TH</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
638 4<sup>TH</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Occupant  
648 4<sup>TH</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107

Mr. & Mrs Robert Frangieh  
685 4<sup>TH</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107-1601

Occupant  
655 4<sup>TH</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107





# CHAPTER VIII

## APPENDICES

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### APPENDIX A: Initial Study





# APPENDIX A

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## INITIAL STUDY

**NOTICE THAT AN  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
IS DETERMINED TO BE REQUIRED**

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**Date of this Notice:** August 14, 1999

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**Lead Agency:** Planning Department, City and County of San Francisco  
1660 Mission Street - 5th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103-2414

**Agency Contact Person:** Tim Blomgren

**Telephone:** (415) 558-6373

---

**Project Title:** 1998.864E: 650-690 Fourth Street  
Live/Work Project

**Project Sponsor:** Meier-Vidovich  
**Project Contact Person:** Bruce Baumann

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**Project Address: Assessor's Block(s) and Lot(s):** Block 3786, Lots 8-9

**City and County:** San Francisco

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**Project Description:** The project site (Lots 8 and 9 of Assessor's Block 3786) is directly across the street from the San Francisco Caltrain Station, at the northwest corner of Fourth and Townsend Streets. All of the approximately 22,000 square foot site is currently occupied by a masonry and concrete commercial/industrial structure constructed in 1926 and a wood frame tourist hotel constructed in 1907. The commercial/industrial building is currently vacant, as is the tourist hotel with the exception of the ground floor which contains a bar and a small restaurant.

The project would demolish the two existing buildings on the site and construct a new 7-story, 70-foot high building with a total gross floor area of about 134,000 square feet. The new building would have 54 live/work units which would occupy 85,000 square feet. The building also would have about 14,500 square of retail at the street level. Two lots would be merged.

The north elevation of this new building would face Bluxome Street. On the west end of the Bluxome Street side of this building would be an entrance to a ramp down to a 57-car garage for the occupants of the live/work units. On the 4th Street side of the building, there would be an entrance to a 9-space ground level garage devoted to short term parking. This garage would also contain one 10' X 25' service vehicle space.

The main pedestrian access to the live/work units would be from an entrance on Fourth Street. This entrance would lead to a residential elevator lobby which would have two elevators going to the residential floors. In addition, stairs would lead from the upper floors to an exit on Bluxome Street and on Townsend Street.

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**THIS PROJECT MAY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT IS REQUIRED.** This determination is based upon the criteria of the Guidelines of the State Secretary for Resources, Section 15063 (Initial Study), 15064 (Determining Significant Effect), and 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance), and the reasons documented in the Environmental Evaluation (Initial Study) for the project, available upon request.

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Deadline for Filing of an Appeal to the City Planning Commission of this Determination that an EIR is required: September 13, 1999. An appeal requires: 1) a letter specifying the grounds for the appeal, and; 2) a \$209.00 check payable to the San Francisco Planning Department..

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hillary Gitelman  
Environmental Review Officer

650-690--4TH STREET LIVE/WORK PROJECT  
INITIAL STUDY  
1998.864E

## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site (Lots 8 and 9 of Assessor's Block 3786) is directly across the street from the San Francisco Caltrain Station, at the northwest corner of Fourth and Townsend Streets (See Figure 1 on page 3). All of the approximately 22,000 square foot site is currently occupied by a masonry and concrete commercial/industrial structure constructed in 1926 and a wood frame tourist hotel constructed in 1907. The commercial/industrial building is currently vacant, as is the tourist hotel with the exception of the ground floor which contains a bar and a small restaurant.

Project components would include:

- \* demolition of the both the 650-4th Street building and the 690-4th Street building.
- \* construction of a new 7-story live/work building with ground-level retail.
- \* merging of the two lots on the project site into a single lot.

The project would demolish the two existing buildings on the site and construct a new 7-story, 70-foot high building with a total gross floor area of about 134,000 square feet. The new building would contain 54 live/work units which will occupy 85,000 square feet. The building also would contain about 14,500 square of retail at the street level.

The north elevation of this new building would face Bluxome Street. On the west end of the Bluxome Street side of this building would be an entrance to a ramp down to a 57-car garage for the occupants of the live/work units. On the 4th Street side of the building, there would be an entrance to a 9-space ground level garage devoted to short term parking associated with retail uses. This garage would also contain one 10' X 25' service vehicle space. The main pedestrian access to the live/work units would be from an entrance on Fourth Street. This entrance would lead to a residential elevator lobby which would have two elevators going to the residential floors. In addition, stairs would lead from the upper floors to an exit on Bluxome Street and one on Townsend Street.

## II. SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

### A. EFFECTS FOUND TO BE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT

The Fourth and Townsend Live/Work Project is examined in this Initial Study to identify potential effects on the environment. Impacts on transportation and historic resources, have been determined to be potentially significant, and will be analyzed in an Environmental Impact Report



Figure 1--Project Location  
650-690 Fourth Street  
CASE 1998.864E



0 1000



N

(EIR). Land use and zoning will be discussed in the EIR for informational purposes.

## B. EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The following potential impacts were determined either to be insignificant or to be mitigated through the measures included in the project. These items are discussed further in Section III below, and require no further environmental analysis in the EIR: land use, visual quality, population, noise, air quality, shadow, utilities/public services, biology, geology/topography, and hazards.

## III. ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

A.	<u>COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING ZONING AND PLANS</u>	<u>Not</u>	<u>Discussed</u>
		<u>Applicable</u>	
1)	Discuss any variances, special authorizations, or changes proposed to the City Planning Code or Zoning Map, if applicable.	<u>X</u>	—
2)	Discuss any conflicts with any adopted environmental plans and goals of the City or Region, if applicable.	<u>X</u>	—

The San Francisco Planning Code, which incorporates by reference the City Zoning Maps, governs permitted uses, densities and configuration of buildings within San Francisco. Permits to construct new buildings or to alter or demolish existing ones may not be issued unless the proposed project conforms to the Code or an exception is granted pursuant to provisions of the Code.

The project site is within an SSO (Service/Secondary Office) Zoning District. The Planning Code states that the SSO District “is designed to accommodate small-scale light industrial, home and business services, art activities, live/work units, and small-scale office space large-floor-plate ‘back office’ for sales and clerical workforces” (Section 818). General commercial, most retail, service uses and live/work are permitted uses in the SSO District.

The project site is within a 65-X Height/Bulk District (65 foot basic height limit with no bulk restrictions). The proposed project would have a height of 70 feet, consistent with Section 260 (b) (1) (O) of the Planning Code which permits five additional feet of building height in building occupied by live/work units within a South of Market District. The project would have a floor area ratio (FAR) of 4.0, which is the maximum basic FAR permitted in the SSO District .

On August 5, 1999, the Planning Commission adopted interim zoning controls for the City’s industrially zoned land. The general intent of the interim zoning controls is to create an Industrial Protection Zone (IPZ) and Mixed Use Housing Zones within the City’s industrially zoned land. Within the IPZ, new housing uses, including live/work projects, are not permitted. Within the Mixed Use Housing Zones, live/work is a principal permitted use. On the boundary between

these two zones, new live/work projects are allowable as a Conditional Use. The proposed project at 4th and Townsend Street is located on a block that has been designated as being within the proposed IPZ Buffer Zone where new live/work projects would be conditional use, but would be considered by the Commission as a “pipeline” project under earlier zoning controls.

The proposed lot merger would require a Parcel Map for merger from the Department of Public Works. The project would require building permits, which would require review and approval by the Planning Department, the Department of Building Inspection, and the Fire Department.

Environmental plans and policies are those, like the Bay Area Air Quality Plan, which directly address environmental issues and/or contain targets or standards which must be met in order to preserve or improve characteristics of the City's physical environment. The current proposed project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such adopted environmental plan or policy.

The City's General Plan, which provides general policies and objectives to guide land use decisions, contains some policies which relate to physical environmental issues. The current project would not obviously or substantially conflict with any such policy. In general, potential conflicts with the General Plan are considered by decision makers independently of the environmental review process, as part of the decision whether to approve or disapprove a proposed project. Any potential conflict not identified here could be considered in that context, and would not alter the physical environmental effects of the proposed project. Relevant General Plan Policies will be included in the EIR for informational purposes.

## B. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Except for items regarding historic architectural resources and transportation, all items on the Initial Study Checklist have been checked “No”, indicating that, upon evaluation, staff has determined that the proposed project could not have a significant adverse environmental effect. Several of those Checklist items have also been checked “Discussed”, indicating that the Initial Study text includes discussion about that particular issue. For all of the items checked “No”, without discussion, the conclusions regarding potential significant adverse environmental effects are based upon field observation, staff experience and expertise on similar projects, and/or standard reference material available within the Department, such as the Department's Transportation Guidelines For Environmental Review, or the California Natural Diversity Data Base and maps, published by the California Department of Fish and Game. For each checklist item, the evaluation has considered the impacts of the project both individually and cumulatively.

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DISCUSSED</u>
(a) Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Have any substantial impact upon the existing character of the vicinity?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>



The land uses on this project site consist of a vacant industrial building and a vacant hotel which has a bar and a restaurant at the ground level. The project would result in a change of land use from two mostly vacant buildings with a bar and a restaurant to a 7-story structure containing 54 live/work units and approximately 14,500 square feet of ground-level retail. Approval of the proposed project would result in an intensification of use on the site, the specific impacts of which are discussed below under each relevant topic heading.

Land uses surrounding the project site are primarily industrial, live/work, and professional offices. Across Fourth Street to the east is a four-story industrial building and a creamery. Diagonally across the intersection of Fourth and Townsend Streets is a public parking lot within the Mission Bay Redevelopment Area. (According to the Final Mission Bay Subsequent Environmental Impact Report, this area has a land use designation of Mission Bay North Retail. Residential and entertainment-oriented commercial uses are being proposed on the site)/1/. Directly south of the project site across Townsend Street is the San Francisco Caltrain Depot. To the west of the project site is a four-story professional office building which has some multimedia establishments as tenants. Directly north of the project site across Bluxome Street is a restaurant/cafe.

The change in land use on the site would not be considered a significant impact because live/work is a permitted land use in the South of Market SSO District and would not be substantially or demonstrably incompatible with the existing variety of residential, commercial and light industrial uses in the project area. Where potential land use conflicts may exist, they would not be of a magnitude or severity that would be considered a significant environmental impact. The proposed infill development would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of the neighborhood.

The construction of live/work units in the South of Market area and other areas of the City has raised concerns about light industrial businesses being displaced by recent live/work developments. The proposed live/work project would cause displacement of a bar and a restaurant and would not directly displace any industrial or residential uses. In a situation in which there may be competition between permitted land uses in an area where one use may have an economic advantage over the other(s), displacement of one use by another would be a socio-economical impact resulting primarily from market forces. In the purview of CEQA, only when a proposed use has a potential significant adverse effect on the physical environment would it be appropriate to call the effect of the proposed use a significant environmental impact.

For the reasons discussed above, the proposed project would not have a significant land use impact. Land use and zoning issues will be discussed in the EIR for informational purposes.

## Visual Quality

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DISCUSSED</u>
(a) Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Substantially degrade or obstruct any scenic view or vista now observed from public areas?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(c) Generate obtrusive light or glare substantially impacting other properties?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

The proposed project would result in a visual change, since it would demolish an existing two story industrial building dating from 1926 and a four-story wooden frame hotel dating from 1907 and replace these buildings with a new 7-story building. The buildings surrounding the proposed project site are two to six-story commercial, office, residential, and industrial structures with building heights from 30 to 65 feet. There is no prevailing visual character to the existing structures on Fourth Street or on Townsend Street that would be compromised by the proposed project. The proposed building would be 70 feet in height which would be only about five feet higher than the adjacent building to the west. Therefore, the proposed building would not be excessively out of scale with the neighborhood.

The proposed project would alter views of the site from surrounding properties, and would introduce a new element to views currently enjoyed from public areas such as the Caltrain depot. The project would not, however, substantially degrade a scenic view or vista currently available from this or other public areas.

In view of the above, Visual Quality, including visual design and glare, does not require further study in the EIR. However, aesthetics issues as they relate to historic preservation will be discussed in the EIR.

## Population

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DISCUSSED</u>
(a) Induce substantial growth or concentration of population?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Displace a large number of people (involving either housing or employment)?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(c) Create a substantial demand for additional housing in San Francisco, or substantially reduce the housing supply?	—	<u>X</u>	—

The proposed project would displace an operating bar and restaurant and construct a mixed-use project with about 14,500 square feet of retail, resulting in no significant change in on-site employment.

The 54 live/work units would increase the resident population on the site by about 108, based on an average household size of two persons per household for the project area. While potentially

noticeable to immediately adjacent neighbors, this increase would not substantially increase the existing area-wide population within this developed urban project area. Population and housing would require no further analysis in the EIR.

<u>Transportation/Circulation</u>		<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DISCUSSED</u>
(a)	Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system?	TO BE DETERMINED		
		—	—	—
(b)	Interfere with existing transportation systems, causing substantial alterations to circulation patterns or major traffic hazards?	TO BE DETERMINED		
		—	—	—
(c)	Cause a substantial increase in transit demand which cannot be accommodated by existing or proposed transit capacity?	TO BE DETERMINED		
		—	—	—
(d)	Cause a substantial increase in parking demand which cannot be accommodated by existing parking facilities?	TO BE DETERMINED		
		—	—	—

Increased residential population and increased retail activity on the project site would result in an increased demand on the local transportation system, including increased traffic and increased transit demand. Project effects on transportation and circulation, including intersection operations, transit demand, and impacts on pedestrian and bicycle circulation, parking, and freight loading, as well as construction impacts, will be analyzed in the EIR.

<u>Noise</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DISCUSSED</u>
(a) Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Violate Title 24 Noise Insulation Standards, if applicable?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(c) Be substantially impacted by existing noise levels?	—	<u>X</u>	—

Ambient noise in the project vicinity is typical of noise levels in the South of Market area, which are dominated by vehicular traffic including trucks, cars, Caltrain and emergency vehicles. The Environmental Protection Element of the San Francisco General Plan indicated a day-night background noise level (Ldn) of 70 dbA on Townsend Street and 70 dbA on Fourth Street in 1974.

Demolition, excavation, and building construction, including any required pile driving, would temporarily increase noise in the site vicinity and could be disruptive to surrounding businesses and residents. In general, construction noise is regulated by the San Francisco Noise Ordinance. (Article 29 of the City Police Code). The ordinance requires that the noise levels from individual pieces of construction equipment, other than impact tools, not exceed 80 dbA at a distance of 100 feet from the source. Impact tools (such as jackhammers and impact wrenches) must have both



intake and exhaust muffled to the satisfaction of Director of Public Works.

Construction of the proposed project would occur over a period of about one year and involve installing from 28 to 50 piles driven to bedrock to support the structure and floors of the proposed buildings. Pile driving would occur intermittently over a period from two to four weeks. In general, the noise from pile driving, especially when the pile driver strikes a pile, could be about 90 dBA at about 100 feet from the construction area. The noise levels at receptors near the project site would depend on their distance from the noise source and on the presence or absence of noise barriers. The noise from the pile driver would be most noticeable along the frontage of the construction area and decrease with distance. Vibrations from the impact of piles with the ground would be felt in adjacent buildings, which are primarily industrial, live/work, multimedia and professional offices (see the Project Setting for a detailed description of uses adjacent to the project site).

The noise and vibration from pile driving may annoy or disturb the occupants of nearby properties. Mitigation Measures 1-3 listed in the Mitigation Measures Section of this Initial Studies (pages 15-16) would minimize disturbance to the occupants of nearby properties from the noise and vibration during pile driving on the project site. The mitigation measures involve scheduling pile driving during the times of day that would minimize disturbance to the occupants of nearby properties, reducing the vibration on the ground surface during pile driving, and reducing the amount of noise generated by the pile driver. Implementation of these mitigation measures would ensure that the potential noise and vibration effects during pile driving would be less than significant.

A concern has been raised by the owner of a neighboring business which operates sound recording equipment that construction noise of this project could interfere with the recording activities with the mitigation for pile driving described above, and with compliance with the City's Noise Ordinance. The increase in noise and vibration in the project area during project construction would not be considered a significant impact of the proposed project because the construction noise would be temporary and restricted in occurrence and level. The project sponsor has stated his intention to address concerns about construction noise through discussions with the adjacent business.

An approximate doubling of traffic volumes in the area would be necessary to produce an increase in ambient noise levels noticeable to most people. The project would not cause a doubling in traffic volumes and therefore would not cause a noticeable increase in the ambient noise level in the project vicinity. No additional analysis of noise is required in the EIR.

**Air Quality/Climate**

	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b><u>NO</u></b>	<b><u>DISCUSSED</u></b>
(a) Violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(c) Permeate its vicinity with objectionable odors?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(d) Alter wind, moisture or temperature (including sun shading effects) so as to substantially affect public areas, or change the climate either in the community or region?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has established thresholds for projects requiring its review for potential air quality impacts. These thresholds are based on the minimum size projects which the District considers capable of producing air quality problems. Generally, for live/work type development of this kind, 530 dwelling units would be required in order to exceed BAAQMD's minimum threshold of significance of 80 lbs./day of Reactive Organic Gasses (ROG). The project would not exceed this minimum standard. Therefore, no significant air quality impacts would be generated by the proposal.

Grading, excavation, and construction activity on the proposed project sites could temporarily raise dust levels in the area, affecting local air quality. In order to reduce the quantity of dust generated during the site preparation and construction, the project sponsor has agreed to require the project contractor to spray the site with water at least twice daily (see Mitigation Measure #4 p.16). Air quality requires no additional analysis in the EIR.

**Shadows**

Section 295 of the City Planning Code was adopted in response to Proposition K (passed November 1984) in order to protect certain public open spaces from shadowing by new structures during the period between one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset, year round. Section 295 restricts new shadow upon public spaces under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department by any structure exceeding 40 feet unless the City Planning Commission finds the impact to be insignificant. To determine whether this project would conform with Section 295, a shadow fan analysis was prepared by the Department of City Planning. This analysis determined that the project shadow would not shade public areas subject to Section 295. (A copy of the shadow fan analysis is available for review at the Department of City Planning, 1660 Mission Street.)

**Utilities/Public Services**

	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b><u>NO</u></b>	<b><u>DISCUSSED</u></b>
(a) Breach published national, state or local standards relating to solid waste or litter control?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(b) Extend a sewer trunk line with capacity to serve new development?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(c) Substantially increase demand for schools, recreation or other public facilities?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(d) Require major expansion of power, water, or communications facilities?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>

The proposed project would increase demand for and use of public services and utilities on the site and increase water and energy consumption, but not in excess of amounts expected and provided for in this area. This topic requires no further analysis and will not be included in the EIR.

**Biology**

	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b><u>NO</u></b>	<b><u>DISCUSSED</u></b>
(a) Substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat of the species?	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Substantially diminish habitat for fish, wildlife or plants, or interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(c) Require removal of substantial numbers of mature, scenic trees?	—	<u>X</u>	—

The project site is covered by impervious surfaces, namely the two existing buildings. There are no trees on the site. As the site is covered with asphalt and within a developed area of the City, it does not provide habitats for any rare or endangered plant or animal species. No other important biological resources are likely since the site has been disturbed by human and domestic animals. This topic will not be discussed in the EIR.

**Geology/Topography**

	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b><u>NO</u></b>	<b><u>DISCUSSED</u></b>
(a) Expose people or structures to major geologic hazards (slides, subsidence, erosion and liquefaction).	—	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
(b) Change substantially the topography or any unique geologic or physical features of the site?	—	<u>X</u>	—

This project site's elevation is 15 feet above sea level on fill material. The San Francisco General Plan Community Safety Element contains maps that show areas in the City subject to groundshaking from earthquakes along the San Andreas and Northern Hayward Faults and other faults in the San Francisco Bay Area. The project site is within a Seismic Hazards Study Zone (SHSZ) designated by the California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG). The CDMG defines an SHSZ as an area with the potential for liquefaction and has set procedures for local review of proposals to develop these areas. Also, it is within an area susceptible to a potential



subsidence hazard.

The project site is in a Special Geologic Study Area as shown in the Community Safety Element of the San Francisco General Plan. This map indicates areas in which one or more geologic hazards exist. The project sponsor has provided a geotechnical investigation report prepared by a California-licensed geotechnical engineer that is on file with the Planning Department and available for public review as part of the project file. The recommendations contained in the report include but are not limited to: having the micro pile lengths be estimated assuming that the top of the bearing soil is 35 feet below the building ground floor slab; extending the piles a minimum of five feet into the bearing layer; providing resistance to the lateral load by passive resistance of the soil acting upon the grade beam; and ensuring that the backfill material has a liquid limit of 40 percent or less and a plasticity index of 15 or less. The geotechnical report found the site suitable for development providing that the recommendations included in the report were incorporated into the design and construction of the proposed development./2/ The sponsor has agreed to follow the recommendations of the report in constructing the project.

The final building plans would be reviewed by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). In reviewing building plans, the DBI refers to a variety of information sources to determine existing hazards and assess requirements for mitigation. Sources reviewed include maps of Special Geologic Study Areas and known landslide areas in San Francisco as well as the building inspectors' working knowledge of areas of special geologic concern. The above referenced geotechnical investigation would be available for use by the DBI during its review of building permits for the site. Also, DBI could require that additional site-specific soils report(s) be prepared in conjunction with permit applications, as needed. The review of the building permit application would reduce the potential geological hazards to a level of non-significance. This topic will not be discussed in the EIR.

**Hazards**

**YES NO DISCUSSED**

- |     |  |   |          |          |
|-----|--|---|----------|----------|
| (a) | Create a potential public health hazard or involve the use, production or disposal of materials which pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the area affected? | — | <u>X</u> | <u>X</u> |
| (b) | Interfere with emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans?   | — | <u>X</u> | —        |
| (c) | Create a potentially substantial fire hazard?  | — | <u>X</u> | —        |

The City has adopted an ordinance (Ordinance 253-86, signed by the Mayor on June 27, 1986) which requires analyzing soil for hazardous wastes within specified areas when over 50 cubic yards of soil is to be disturbed. The ordinance specifically includes sites, such as the project site, which are bayward of the high tide line [as shown on maps available from the Department of Public Works (DPW)]. The proposed project would result in the excavation of about 5,700-6,000 cubic yards of soil and would be subject to soil testing requirements, as specified in Article 20 of the San Francisco Public Works Code.

Where hazardous wastes are found in excess of standards, the sponsor would be required to submit a site mitigation plan (SMP) to the City's Department of Public Health, and to implement the SMP prior to issuance of any building permit. The SMP would specify handling and disposal requirements for the site soils. If contamination is present, standard health and safety measures would be required to limit exposures by construction workers and members of the public.

Asbestos-containing building materials have been identified within the existing buildings at 650-690 Fourth Street./3/ They included a significantly damaged gypsum wallboard that is the remains of previous interior demolition activities. The amount of material observed is estimated to be less than 100 square feet. Section 19827.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, adopted January 1, 1991, requires that local agencies not issue demolition or alteration permits until an applicant has demonstrated compliance with notification requirements under applicable Federal regulations regarding hazardous air pollutants, including asbestos. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) is vested by the California legislature with authority to regulate airborne pollutants, including asbestos, through both inspection and law enforcement, and is to be notified ten days in advance of any proposed demolition or abatement work.

Notification includes the names and addresses of operations and persons responsible; description and location of the structure to be demolished/altered including size, age and prior use, and the approximate amount of friable asbestos; scheduled starting and completion dates of demolition or abatement; nature of planned work and methods to be employed; procedures to be employed to meet BAAQMD requirements; and the name and location of the waste disposal site to be used. The District randomly inspects asbestos removal operations. In addition, the District will inspect any removal operation concerning which a complaint has been received.

The local office of the State Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) must be notified of asbestos abatement to be carried out. Asbestos removal contractors must be certified as such by the Contractors Licensing Board of the State of California. The owner of the property where abatement is to occur must have a Hazardous Waste Generator Number assigned by and registered with the Office of the California Department of Health Services in Sacramento. The contractor/hauler of the material is required to file a Hazardous Waste Manifest which details the hauling of the material from the site and the disposal of it. Pursuant to California law, the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) would not issue the required permit until the applicant has complied with the notice requirements described above.

These regulations and procedures, already established as a part of the permit review process, would insure that any potential impacts due to asbestos would be reduced to a level of insignificance.

A total of 23 paint samples readings were taken from the exterior of the building to determine the presence of lead based paint./4/ Four sample readings had lead content above the level of the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) considers to be lead based. The lead containing paint was found on the exterior of the building. The presence of lead in the exterior paint means that the contractor's activities which could disturb this paint are required to follow Occupational



Safety and Health Administration standards. Construction and renovation activities must also comply with Chapter 36 of the San Francisco Building Code, Work Practices for Exterior Lead - Based Paint Hazards. The ordinance identifies prohibited practices that may not be used in disturbance of removal of lead-based paint and requires that any person performing regulated work shall use all reasonable effort to remove all visible lead paint contaminants from all regulated areas of prior to completion of the work.

The ordinance includes notification requirements requiring notification of bidders for the demolition work of any paint-inspection reports verifying the presence or absence of lead-based paint in the regulated area of the proposed project. Prior to commencement of work, the responsible party (owner or contractor) must provide written notice to the Director of Building Inspection of the location of the project; the nature and approximate square footage of the painted surface being disturbed and/or removed; anticipated job start and completion dates for the work; whether the responsible party has reason to know or presume that lead based paint is present; whether the building is residential or non-residential, owner-occupied, or rental property; the approximate number of dwelling units, if any; the dates by which the responsible party has or would fulfill any tenant or adjacent property notification requirements; and the name, address, telephone, and pager number of the party who will perform the work. The ordinance contains provisions regarding inspection, sampling and enforcement and describes penalties for compliance with the requirements of the ordinance.

These regulations and procedures required as a part of the San Francisco Building Code would ensure that potential impact due to lead-based paint would be reduced to a level of significance. Therefore, no further mitigation is required.

### **Cultural**

### **YES NO DISCUSSED**

(a) Disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social group; or a paleontological site except as a part of a scientific study?	To Be Determined — — —		
(b) Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area?	—	<u>X</u>	—
(c) Conflict with the preservation of buildings subject to the provisions of Article 10 or Article 11 of the City Planning Code?	<u>X</u>	—	<u>X</u>

### **Historical Architectural Resources**

The existing 690-4th Street Building, constructed in 1926, has been determined eligible for the National Register through a consensus determination by a federal agency and the State Historic Preservation Officer. Due to this determination, the building is listed in the California Register



of Historic Resources, and is considered an historical resource pursuant to CEQA Section 21084.1. The existing 650-4th Street building, although constructed in 1907, is not rated in any surveys of historical architectural resources, and is not presently considered an historical resource. Because both buildings are proposed for demolition, the project's potential effects on historic architectural resources will be discussed in the EIR.

The depth of the proposed evacuation would be approximately 11 feet and, as stated earlier, the project would involve the movement of about 5,700 and 6,000 cubic yards of soil. Given the location and magnitude of excavation proposed, and the possibility that archaeological resources would be encountered on the project site, the sponsor has agreed to archaeological mitigations found in Mitigation Measure #5 on page 16. Archaeological issues will not be further discussed in the EIR.

<b>C.     <u>OTHER</u></b>	<b><u>YES</u>   <u>NO</u>   <u>DISCUSSED</u></b>
Require approval and/or permits from City Departments other than Department of City Planning or Bureau of Building Inspection, or from Regional, State or Federal Agencies?	<u>  X  </u> <u>  —  </u> <u>  X  </u>

As noted in Section III.A, the proposed project would require a Parcel Map for merger from the Department of Public Works.

<b>D.     <u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u></b>	<b><u>YES</u>   <u>NO</u>   <u>N/A</u>   <u>DISCUSSED</u></b>
Could the project have significant effects if mitigation measures are not included in the project?	<u>  X  </u> <u>  —  </u> <u>  —  </u> <u>  X  </u>
Are all mitigation measures necessary to eliminate significant effects included in the project?	<u>  —  </u> <u>  X  </u> <u>  —  </u> <u>  X  </u>

The following are mitigation measures related to topic determined to require no further analysis in the EIR. The EIR will contain a mitigation chapter describing these measures, which are proposed as part of the project, and also including other measures which would be, or could be, adopted to reduce potential adverse effects of the project identified in the EIR.

#### **Mitigation Measure #1: NOISE**

The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to limit pile driving activity such that it results in the least disturbance to occupants and users of adjacent and nearby properties. Implementation of this measure may require the construction contractor(s) to obtain a permit for nighttime work from the Director of the Department of Public Works if pile driving during nighttime hours would be the least disruptive to these occupants and

users.

### **Mitigation Measure #2: NOISE**

The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to predrill holes for the piles (if feasible based on the soil type on the project site) to the maximum feasible depth to minimize noise and vibration from pile driving.

### **Mitigation Measure #3: NOISE**

The project sponsor shall require the construction contractor(s) for the proposed project to use state-of-the-art muffled and shielded pile drivers.

### **Mitigation Measure #4: CONSTRUCTION AIR QUALITY**

The project sponsor would require the contractor(s) to spray the site with water during demolition, excavation, and construction activities; spray unpaved construction areas with water at least twice per day; cover stockpiles of soil, sand, and other material; cover trucks hauling debris, soils, sand or other such material; and sweep surrounding streets during demolition, excavation, and construction at least once per day to reduce particulate emissions.

Ordinance 175-91, passed by the Board of Supervisors on May 6, 1991, requires that non-potable water be used for dust control activities. Therefore, the project sponsor would require that the contractor(s) obtain reclaimed water from the Clean Water Program for this purpose. The project sponsors would require the project contractor(s) to maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions of particulates and other pollutants, by such means as a prohibition on idling motors when equipment is not in use or when trucks are waiting in queues, and implementation of specific maintenance programs to reduce emissions for equipment that would be in frequent use for much of the construction period.

### **Mitigation Measure #5--ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Should evidence of archaeological resources of potential significance be found during ground disturbance, the project sponsor would immediately notify the Environmental Review Officer (ERO) and would suspend any excavation which the ERO determined could damage such archaeological resources. Excavation or construction activities which might damage discovered cultural resources would be suspended for a total maximum of four weeks over the course of construction.

After notifying the ERO, the project sponsor would select an archaeologist to assist the Office of Environmental Review in determining the significance of the find. The archaeologist would prepare a draft report containing an assessment of the potential significance of the find and recommendations for what measures should be implemented to minimize potential effects on archaeological resources. Based on this report, the ERO would recommend specific additional

mitigation measures to be implemented by the project sponsor.

Mitigation measures might include a site security program, additional on-site investigations by the archaeologist, and/or documentation, preservation, and recovery of cultural materials. Finally, the archaeologist would prepare a draft report documenting the cultural resources that were discovered, an evaluation as to their significance, and a description as to how any archaeological testing, exploration and/or recovery program was conducted.

Copies of all draft reports prepared according to this mitigation measure would be sent first and directly to the ERO for review. Following approval by the ERO, copies of the final report(s) would be sent by the archaeologist directly to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center. Three copies of the final archaeology report(s) shall be submitted to the Office of Environmental Review, accompanied by copies of the transmittals documenting its distribution to the President of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the California Archaeological Site Survey Northwest Information Center.

#### NOTES

/1/ San Francisco Planning Department and San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. Final Mission Bay Subsequent Environmental Impact Report. September 17, 1998.

/2/ Subsurface Consultants, Inc., Geotechnical Investigation, Seismic Upgrade, 660 Fourth Street, San Francisco, California. May 16, 1997.

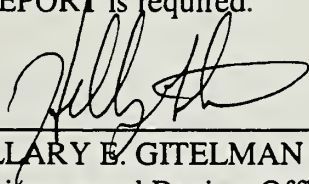
/3/ ACC Environmental Consultants, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Update, 660-690 Fourth Street, San Francisco, California. March 18, 1998.

/4/ *Ibid.*



F. ON THE BASIS OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

- I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared by the Department of City Planning.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures, numbers \_\_\_\_\_, in the discussion have been included as part of the proposed project. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- X I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

  
HILLARY E. GITEMAN  
Environmental Review Officer

for

Gerald G. Green  
Director of Planning

DATE: AUGUST 14, 1999

# CHAPTER IX

## EIR AUTHORS AND CONSULTANTS

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PLACE  
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HERE

San Francisco Planning Department  
Office of Major Environmental Analysis  
1660 Mission Street, 5th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Attn: Tim Blomgren, EIR Coordinator  
98.864E--650-690 Fourth Street Project

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PLEASE CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

RETURN REQUEST REQUIRED FOR FINAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

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REQUEST FOR FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

TO: San Francisco Planning Department,  
Office of Environmental Review

Please send me a copy of the Final EIR.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Your Name and Address Below

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